





HINTS
13
ON A
SYSTEM
OF
POPULAR EDUCATION:

ADDRESSED TO R. S. FIELD, ESQ.

CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN THE LEGISLATURE OF NEW JERSEY; AND TO

THE REV. A. B. DOD,

PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS IN THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY.

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AUTHOR OF "TWO YEARS AND A HALF IN THE NAVY,"
AND LATE PRINCIPAL OF THE EDGEHILL SCHOOL.

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P R E F A C E.

WHOEVER writes a book, must write a preface. This is one of the laws of THE TRADE: whether it is more honoured in the breach, or in the observance, it is not for us to decide. It is at least a time-honoured custom, from which we shall not, on the present occasion, hazard a departure.

The Preface is generally an Author's Confessional; wherein he duly bepraises his own modesty, sets forth the hurry and various embarrassments under which his work was written, and then humbly craves absolution from the officiating

priest, who is no other than that respectable and ever indulgent personage the Public. This is all very well, and it usually passes for—what it is worth.

Though by no means insensible to the many deficiencies and imperfections which mark the following production, the Author offers no apology for presenting it to his countrymen, and soliciting for it a candid perusal, and a dispassionate judgment, not so much on its literary merits, as on the practicability and expediency of carrying out its views and recommendations. He holds that whoever publishes a book, which he does not at least hope will be useful, not only commits an act of consummate folly, but is guilty of a fraud of the worst kind. Nay, he is chargeable with a two-fold fraud. He deliberately plunders his fellow-men of both money and time, and is the more reprehensible, inasmuch as his robbery detracts from our mental as well as our pecuniary resources.

The work presented to the public in the following pages, is the result of much experience, and

some reading and observation on the subject to which it relates. It would no doubt have been improved in style by a little more attention to that canon of Horace, wherein he enjoins long waiting and many a blot. But the Author writes for utility, rather than fame; his object is to excite to sober reflection, rather than to amuse a vacant hour; and he trusts, therefore, that where his principles are approved, relating as they do to whatever imparts dignity to character, stability to virtue, and refinement to happiness, minor defects will be overlooked, or treated with indulgence.

It may be thought by some that I have discussed the question of religious instruction too much in detail, and quoted too copiously on that point from other authors. Perhaps I have. If so, the unspeakable importance of the subject, and the unreasonable prejudices even of the good in relation to it, will, it is hoped, be considered a sufficient apology.

Thus much it was perhaps fitting to say. Let

this suffice. Without further preliminary, the Author “casts his bread upon the waters” with the earnest hope and prayer that he may “find it after many days.”

January 1, 1838.

DEDICATION

TO

MESSRS. FIELD AND DOD.

GENTLEMEN,

I dedicate and address the following pages to you, not because I think them particularly worthy of your notice, nor yet for the purpose of enlightening you in reference to the subject, concerning which they treat. Whatever other errors I may have committed, I am at least guiltless of so gross a presumption.

I am actuated by a different motive. The occasion affords me an opportunity, which I gladly embrace, of publicly expressing my personal regard, founded upon long intercourse, and of bearing testi-

mony to your zealous services in behalf of the cause of Popular Education.

Shall I avow an additional motive, rather selfish in its character? The truth may as well be confessed. I hoped to impart a somewhat more lively air to a treatise, destined, I fear, to be more repulsive, in any form, to the generality of readers, than I could desire.

You will perhaps inquire whether I expect you to become the advocates of the immediate adoption in practice of all the views I have attempted to enforce? I answer frankly, no; nor do I thus advocate them myself. I do not think it either expedient to make the attempt to the extent here intimated at the present time, or possible to accomplish the object, if it were attempted. And this opinion, or something like it, I have expressed in the body of the work. My aim has been to trace the outlines of such a system of public instruction as, in my judgment, every State in this Union ought, sooner or later, to adopt; and one which, I am persuaded, all may ultimately secure, by the gradual operation

of moral causes, aided by judicious legislation. The standard I have sketched is high; but may not the child be already in existence, who will see practical education fully up to it, if not even beyond? I should esteem the gift of foresight any thing but a blessing, if it revealed to me the certainty, that this would not be the case. At the same time I am free to declare that, if I were drawing a bill to present to any legislature in the United States at the present time, I would take good care to omit much that I have recommended in these Hints.

If the principles herein advocated, and the suggestions hazarded, meet your enlightened approbation, if they are favourably received by my fellow citizens generally, and, more than all, if they contribute in any degree to hasten the result so ardently desired,—the improvement and perfection of our common schools,—my highest ambition will have been satisfied.

With the expression of a devout wish that your career of usefulness may be long and uninterrupted,

DEDICATION.

and that your labours in this cause, as well as others,
may conduce alike to your own fame, and to the
benefit of your country, and of mankind, I am,
Gentlemen,

Your friend and faithful servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Princeton, New Jersey, January 1, 1838.

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CHAPTER I.

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GENTLEMEN :—

THE subject of Popular Education has excited considerable interest of late years not only among the people, but in the legislatures, of many of the States of this Union. No subject can more worthily occupy the thoughts, or call into action the energies of our citizens, in their individual or social capacity. The cause of education is emphatically the cause of the people. Its importance transcends and overshadows that of most, if not all, others, which fall within the scope of legislative action. It is identified with the cause of morality and religion, with the true glory and prosperity of the nation, and with all the most important interests of society. To exhibit its importance, to point out some of the deficiencies of our existing systems of education, and to pre-

Contest between Prejudice and the spirit of Innovation.

sent some views as to the degree of perfection at which we ought to aim, and ultimately to arrive, is the object of the following pages. The subject will not be treated in detail. The author will confine himself, conformably to what is intimated in the title-page, to a few practical "hints" in relation to it; which, however, he hopes will meet with your approval, and with the general approbation of his countrymen, and which, in all modesty, he commends to your and their candid consideration; more on account of the magnitude of the subject and the greatness of the interests involved, than for any peculiar merit he supposes they may possess as a literary production.

Between the prejudice which clings with unrelaxing grasp to whatever enjoys the sanction of age, and the spirit of innovation which would prostrate with Vandal fury every long established institution and usage, the contest that ever has been and ever must be maintained, is in the highest degree salutary. In the great moral and political changes which have taken place in the world, especially those in free states—there have been for the most part three classes of agents; those who could see no good in any thing new, those who were equally blind to the excellence of all that was old, and those who have occupied a middle ground, giving to the arguments of each

Illustrated by the History of various Nations.

of the other parties their just weight, and willing to retain the gold and reject the dross in reconstructing any of the elements of society.

This, it is needless to inform you, was eminently characteristic of political parties in the several states of ancient Greece, and in the Roman Commonwealth. The history of politics in the republics of modern Italy, in France and England, and in various other countries both of Europe and America, affords many and striking examples of the same tendency in human nature. It is well that it is so. This, like all the other moral laws of the Creator, bears the impress of matchless wisdom and benevolence. For, while the obstinately prejudiced and the madly revolutionary are engaged in hot strife with each other, the one party for the old as it is, the other for the substitution of something entirely new, the mass of the people, almost always averse to violent innovations, but roused by the fierce din with which they are assailed, are incited to inquire, "What is the occasion of all this turmoil? Why such fierce contention? What abuses are to be corrected? What institutions modified? What changes wrought?" The representative intelligence of this class, bringing to the examination of these questions broader views and cooler feelings, is enabled to discriminate and weigh the arguments of

Precipitancy to be avoided.

each party, and, by the adoption of suitable measures, to effect such gradual improvements as the exigencies of the times seem either to require or justify.

There is not, I am aware, so much danger of excess in organizing a system of common schools, and therefore not so much necessity for inculcating moderation in reference to it, as there would be with respect to some other measures ; still it is well to understand and avoid the evils of precipitancy. Bad as the systems adopted in many of the states confessedly are, and inadequate, as all are admitted to be, they may be made much worse by hasty and ill-judged legislation. Time,—much time, is necessary both for making the proper investigations as to the best plans of operation, and for preparing the minds of the people for all those ameliorations, which are demanded by the spirit of the age, and the circumstances of our country. Changes, good in themselves, are, when too suddenly effected, frequently attended with consequences more or less to be deplored. *Festina lente*, the celebrated motto of Augustus Cæsar, is on the whole a sound maxim in reference to any great undertaking, though capable of being abused to cloak indifference, or to justify inaction.

With these observations by way of introduction, I proceed to present some views, not alto-

Popular Education a public Duty.

gether, it is hoped, inappropriate at the present time, on several points which seem to require consideration in organising a general system of popular education.

The first topic to which I ask your attention, and that of the public, is the *duty* of making adequate provision by law for the thorough instruction of all the children in the community. From a variety of arguments that might be urged in support of this position, I shall select only three, which seem to me sufficient to establish it to the satisfaction of every candid mind. Popular education is necessary, and therefore it is the duty of the several states to provide for it; first, because of its influence on national and individual character and happiness; secondly, because of its bearing on the pecuniary interests of the country; and thirdly, because of its connexion with the purity and perpetuity of our civil institutions.

That education, based on Christianity, is adapted to elevate the character and promote the happiness of its possessors, is a position which it cannot require any laboured argument to prove, in the nineteenth century, to the citizens of the United States. It is a truth attested by universal experience, and capable of complete demonstration. Were I addressing a popular assembly on this subject, I would say to them,—Cast your eyes abroad

Its Influence on National Character and Happiness.

on the world ; consult time past and present ; compare nations, families, and individuals respectively with each other ;—your survey will lead you to this irresistible conclusion, that education, impregnated with the principles of true religion, is every where the great promoter of whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, lovely, and of good report ; that it is the parent of virtue, industry, and order ; that it is essential to the full benefits of gospel preaching ; and that the want of it is the principal cause of the extreme profligacy, improvidence, and misery, which are so prevalent among the labouring classes in many countries.

A comparison between the Irish and Scottish peasantry would of itself be sufficient to establish this general fact. Among the former we behold little else than sloth, destitution, and crime ; among the latter, even those who are in the worst comparative circumstances, a degree of comfort, the fruit of industry and order, is every where conspicuous. To what is this difference to be ascribed ? The Irish possess as vigorous constitutions, and are as capable of enduring hard labour, as the Scotch. In the two great physical elements of prosperity, soil and climate, Ireland has a clear and decided advantage over Scotland. The difference, then, making every allowance which truth

Comparison between the Scotch and Irish.

and candour can require for the evils of misgovernment in the former country, is owing to the prevalence of intellectual and moral culture in the one case, and the want of it in the other. No other cause can be named, adequate to the production of the effect; and consequently to assign any other would be, as you, gentlemen, well know, to violate one of the first principles of philosophy. In Ireland the education of the poor is deplorably neglected; few of them can either read or write; and almost all are ignorant of nearly every thing that it most befits a rational and accountable creature to understand. In Scotland an order of things exists essentially different. It is rare to meet with a person there who has not some education; schools exist in every parish; and the means of knowledge are brought within the reach of the lowest classes. The result, in each case, is such as has been already described; and such as must always take place under like circumstances.

The most illustrious example, with which I am acquainted, of the elevating and humanizing influence of Christian education on communities, is exhibited in the history of those mountain parishes in the Ban de la Roche under the pastoral care of the celebrated Oberlin—a name embalmed in every philanthropic and pious heart. He who attentively reads the simple narrative of the life

Oberlin—The Ban de la Roche.

and labours of that great and good man, will gain more true instruction than he would by wading through whole folios of theology, metaphysics, and political economy. He will there behold a transformation, as wonderful as the scenes of an Eastern romance, wrought, within the brief period of a few years, in the character and condition of a whole community. He will see it rescued from the accumulated evils of ignorance, vice, and poverty, and raised to the enjoyment of all the blessings of knowledge, virtue, and competence. He will perceive industry, order, contentment, and all the social and moral virtues, enthroned in the heart and shining in the life, where but a few years before the whole social fabric was the sport and prey of every capricious and malignant passion. He will behold, in short, a desolate wilderness, over which a gloom like the pall of death had brooded for centuries, suddenly converted into the garden of the Lord, with the freshness of Eden covering the scene, and the smile of heaven gilding the prospect. He will learn also the moral of the whole story—the means by which this amazing revolution was effected. And what were they? Learning and Religion—those guardian angels that watch, with spirits ever wakeful and benignant, over the happiness of mortals. Christian Education was the sole source of the change, and of all the blessings which followed in its train.

Influence of Education on Families.

Education is not less benign in its influence on families than on communities. Few contrasts can be imagined stronger than that which exists between an enlightened and well ordered Christian family, and one enveloped in the dank and misty and putrid atmosphere of ignorance ; between the dignity, refinement, and happiness, which mark the domestic relations on the one side, and the brutal passions and haggard wretchedness, that reign with undisputed and terrific sway on the other. Foster, in his excellent *Essay on the Evils of Popular Ignorance*, has sketched, with his usual power, an appalling picture of the ferocity and misery of a family destitute of religious and mental culture. After describing such a family—the menaces and imprecations of the parents, and their want of resources for engaging and occupying, for amusing and instructing, the younger minds ; and the strife, rudeness, and insubordination of the children—he adds :—

“ Now, imagine a week, month, or year, of the intercourse in such a domestic society, the course of talk, the mutual manners, and the progress of mind and character; where there is a sense of drudgery approaching to that of slavery, in the unrelenting necessity of labour, where there is none of the interest of imparting knowledge or receiving it, or of reciprocating knowledge that has

Picture of an ignorant Family.

been imparted and received ; where there is not an acre, if we might express it so, of intellectual space around them, clear of the thick universal fog of ignorance, where, especially, the luminaries of the spiritual heaven, the attributes of the Almighty, the grand phenomenon of redeeming mediation, the solemn realities of a future state and another world, are totally obscured in that shade ; where the conscience and the discriminations of duty are dull and indistinct, from the youngest to the oldest ; where there is no genuine respect felt or shown on the one side, nor affection unmixed with vulgar petulance and harshness, expressed perhaps in wicked imprecations on the other ; where a mutual coarseness of manners and language has the effect, without their being aware of it as a cause, of debasing their worth in one another's esteem all round ; and where, notwithstanding all, they absolutely must pass a great deal of time together, to converse, and to display their dispositions towards one another, and exemplify what the primary relations of life are reduced to, when divested of all that is to give them dignity, endearment, and conduciveness to the highest advantage of existence.

“ Home has but little to please the young members of such a family, and a great deal to make them eager to escape out of the house ; which is also a welcome riddance to the elder persons,

Strife between Parents and Children.

when it is not in neglect or refusal to perform the ordinary allotments of labour. So little is the feeling of a peaceful cordiality created among them by their seeing one another all within the habitation, that, not unfrequently, the passer-by may learn the fact of their collective number being there, from the sound of a low strife of mingled voices, some of them betraying youth replying in anger or contempt, to maturity or age. It is wretched to see how early this liberty is boldly taken. As the children perceive nothing in the *minds* of their parents that should awe them into deference, the most important difference left between them is that of physical strength. The children, if of hardy disposition, to which they are perhaps trained in battles with their juvenile rivals, soon show a certain degree of daring against this superior strength. And as the difference lessens, and by the time it has nearly ceased, what is so natural as that they should assume equality, in manners, and in following their own will? But equality assumed where there should be subordination, inevitably involves contempt toward the party against whose claim it is asserted.

“The relative condition of such parents as they sink into old age, is most deplorable. And all that has preceded leads, by a natural course, to that consequence which we have sometimes beheld,

Deplorable Condition of such Parents in old Age.

with feelings emphatically gloomy,—the almost perfect indifference with which the descendants, and a few other near relatives, of a poor old man of this class, could consign him to the grave. A human being was gone out of the world, a being whom they had been near all their lives, some of them sustained in their childhood by his labours, and yet not one heart, at any one moment, felt the sentiment—I have lost [a father or a friend.] They never could regard him with respect, and their miserable education had not taught them humanity enough to regard him in his declining days as an object of pity. Some decency of attention was perhaps shown him, or perhaps not, in his last hours. It is a very melancholy spectacle to see an ignorant, thoughtless father, surrounded by his untaught children, at the sight of whom our thought thus silently accosts him: The event which will take you finally from among them, perhaps after forty or fifty years of intercourse with them, will leave no more impression on their affections, than the cutting down of a decayed old tree in the neighbourhood of your habitation.”

This, it must be confessed, is a high-wrought and most melancholy picture, but who shall say that it is exaggerated? Owing to the general diffusion among us of some degree of intellectual cultivation and religious knowledge and influence,

Originals not wanting among us.

originals are not, indeed, as common in this country as in some others ; but the memory of many persons will doubtless recall scenes and histories, which might be truly described or narrated in the words of the preceding extracts. And just in proportion as the lights of knowledge and the influences of religion are wanting in families, in the same proportion will their domestic intercourse approach towards a realization of that dreadful representation just presented, and sketched by a sagacious observer of mankind, as a faithful picture of the effect of ignorance on the family circle.

The converse of this proposition is also unquestionably true. Christian education, in proportion as it sheds its genial influence on that interesting class of communities now under consideration, will always have the effect to exalt, refine, and hallow the domestic relations ; to convert them into unfailing sources of the purest enjoyment ; and to render them conducive to the highest end of our being.

Personal dignity of character and individual happiness are not promoted in a less degree by sound education, than national and social elevation and felicity. Silly atheistical ranters, it is true, are occasionally to be met with, who, in their impious ravings, elevate savage over civilized life ; but none but a fool, a knave, or a madman, would contend

Influence of Education on Individuals.

that the barbarian warrior numbering his scalps, or the ignorant drone in civilized countries, whose pleasures are justly described by Paley as scarcely superior to those of the oyster, are to be placed on the same level in these respects with Newton investigating the laws that bind the planets in their orbits; with Locke, affixing their just limits to the powers of the human mind; with Franklin, teaching the lightning to obey his will; with Milton, soaring to the loftiest regions of poetry; or with Wilberforce, shaking the British senate with his eloquence.

These, it is granted, are extreme cases; nevertheless they are strictly pertinent to the argument. But let us descend to the lower walks of life, and see how we shall find it there. What is it that constitutes the real man? and where is the seat of happiness, properly so called? Is it this corporeal frame, which is destined to "perish in the using?" or is it the ethereal essence that dwells within it—this spirit, formed for thought, knowledge, and immortality? You, gentlemen, and all other intelligent men, will, with united voice, answer—The latter—and this response does but echo a sentiment every where inscribed on the pages of the sacred record.

Happiness cannot be predicated of the senses; it is of too ethereal a nature to dwell in any but a spiritual substance. But the mass of mankind

Elevates the Pleasures of the labouring Classes.

cannot devote themselves to literary and scientific pursuits. Bodily labour is the inheritance of sin. We are not merely to eat bread, but we are to eat it in the “sweat of our brow;” we may enjoy the earth indeed, but only on the condition of first “subduing it.” But the benevolent Author of our being, though justice required the execution of the threatened curse, has so arranged the order of things, that most manual employments do not demand the whole attention of those engaged in them; they leave a considerable portion of time, even during the hours of labour, when the thoughts can be usefully, worthily, and delightfully employed on other subjects.

This brings us to the point at which I have been aiming. Which of two labouring men has the advantage over the other in point of real dignity and enjoyment—he whose intellect, in the strong language of the writer above quoted, “suffers a dull absorption, subsides into the mere physical nature, is sunk and sleeping in the animal warmth and functions, and lulled and rocked, as it were, in its lethargy, by the bodily movements in the works which it is not necessary for it to keep habitually awake to direct?” Or he whose mind is in some degree furnished with a knowledge of past and contemporary occurrences, with examples of elevated virtue from sacred and profane history, and

Affords a Resource for their leisure Hours.

with an acquaintance with some of the powers of nature, and the causes of those physical phenomena which every where surround him, and which are constantly beheld by the ignorant herd without emotion or instruction, and regarded as merely common though unintelligible facts ? No person of ordinary intelligence can hesitate in deciding this point. The latter is incomparably superior to the former in the respects here indicated. While his hands are mechanically employed on their wonted tasks, his thoughts can feed upon the knowledge accumulated within. He can thence extract sweet and elevating reflections to beguile the toilsome hours, if he is alone; or interesting anecdotes and useful facts, if others are with him, to enliven the labours of the day, and to amuse or instruct those of his companions whose minds are less cultivated than his own.

The advantage he possesses is still greater during those intervals of labour which occur through the week, and that longer interval afforded by the Christian Sabbath. During these periods, persons without any of the resources of knowledge, if they are of a phlegmatic temperament, generally pass the time in utter inanity ; either sleeping it off their hands, or sunk into a listless unreflecting dulness, in which their minds are far less active than in actual sleep : or, if they are of a more lively

Confers a certain Nobility of Character.

turn, they betake themselves to all sorts of coarse and vulgar merriment, the profane scoff, the ribald jest, the blackguard repartee ; or they take refuge in those gross sensual pleasures, which are more hurtful both to themselves and others, than utter vacuity of thought and emotion. Not so with men in whom the seeds of knowledge and religion were sown, and took root in early childhood, gradually shooting up into plants, which have since been constantly expanding and unfolding their beauties to the sun, and whose fruit now appears in all its fair proportions, engaging colours, and mellow ripeness. Reading, meditation, innocent amusements, and elevating social pleasures, fill up the leisure hours of such men ; and the Sabbath,—that distinctive and glorious feature in the Christian economy,—is devoted to occupations, alike profitable to themselves and pleasing to its Author.

Education, conducted upon sound and comprehensive principles, confers even upon the poor a quickness of conscience, a strength of principle, a liveliness of sympathy, an erectness, independence, and, as it were, nobility of character, which place them on an eminence, whence they can look down on the misery and degradation of the multitudes that throng the cheerless vales of ignorance below. They are often elevated to a region far above the clouds and storms, which darken the

Milton's Picture of the Seraph Abdiel.

horizon, and oppress the hearts of the less intelligent and virtuous of their fellow-creatures. They stand in a relation to these somewhat analogous to the position occupied by the loyal Seraph in reference to the recreant crew of angels, by whom he was surrounded and solicited to rebellion. His glorious independence, courage, and strength and elevation of purpose, are portrayed in the following beautiful lines from *Paradise Lost*.

“ So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he ;
Among innumerable false, unmoved,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal ;
Nor number nor example with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single. From amidst them forth he passed,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustained
Superior, nor of violence feared aught ;
And, with retorted scorn, his back he turned
On those proud towers to swift destruction doomed.”

The advantages of education are thus forcibly summed up and set forth by the eloquent Robert Hall, in his sermon on that subject. “ Knowledge,” says he, “ expands the mind, exalts the faculties, refines the taste of pleasure, and opens numerous sources of intellectual enjoyment. By means of it we become less dependent for satisfac-

Pleasure annexed to the pursuit of Truth.

tion on the sensitive appetites, the gross pleasures of sense are more easily despised, and we are made to feel the superiority of the spiritual to the material part of our nature. Instead of being continually solicited by the influence and irritation of sensible objects, the mind can retire within herself, and expatiate in the cool and quiet walks of contemplation. The Author of Nature has wisely annexed a pleasure to the exercise of our active powers, especially to the pursuit of truth, which, if it be in some instances less intense, is far more durable than the gratifications of sense, and is on that account, to say nothing of its other properties, incomparably more valuable. It may be repeated without satiety, and pleases afresh on every reflection upon it. These are self-created satisfactions, always within our reach, not dependent upon events, and not requiring a peculiar combination of circumstances to produce or maintain them. Let the mind but retain its proper functions, and they spring up spontaneously, unsolicited, unborrowed, and unbought."

"Man, ignorant and uncivilized, is a ferocious, sensual, and superstitious savage. The external world affords some enjoyment to his animal feelings, but it confounds his moral and intellectual faculties. External nature exhibits to his mind a

Contrast between savage and civilized Man.

mighty chaos of events, and a dread display of power. The chain of causation appears too intricate to be unravelled, and the power too stupendous to be controlled. Order and beauty, indeed, occasionally gleam forth to his eye, from detached portions of creation, and seem to promise happiness and joy ; but, more frequently, clouds and darkness brood over the scene, and disappoint his fondest expectations. Evil seems so mixed up with good, that he regards it either as its direct product, or its inseparable accompaniment. Nature is never contemplated with a clear perception of its adaptation to the purpose of promoting the true enjoyment of man, or with a well-founded confidence in the wisdom and benevolence of its Author. Man, when civilized and illuminated by knowledge, on the other hand, discovers in the objects and occurrences around him a scheme beautifully arranged for the gratification of his whole powers, animal, moral, and intellectual; he recognises in himself the intelligent and accountable subject of an all-bountiful Creator, and in joy and gladness desires to study the Creator's works, to ascertain his laws, and to yield to them a steady and a willing obedience. Without undervaluing the pleasures of his animal nature, he tastes the higher, more refined, and more enduring delights of his moral and intellectual capacities, and he

This vantage-ground may be surrendered.

then calls aloud for education as indispensable to the full enjoyment of his rational powers.”*

These are the grounds on which the advocates of this cause have usually and mainly rested its claims. And they are sufficient to sustain it triumphantly against all the assaults of its enemies. But the tendency of education to increase the happiness of society, and to elevate man to his proper dignity by causing the intellect and the moral feelings to predominate over the senses, is a vantage-ground which may be surrendered; and we may boldly meet the opposers of universal education on the broad position, that, so far as the acquisition of individual and national wealth is concerned, it is man’s most efficient ally. The only objection that can be urged with any show of reason against the most thorough national education, is its expensiveness. Now, if it can be shown that such a liberal provision as will secure the benefits of sound instruction to all the people, is a nation’s best economy, “we not only”—to borrow the strong language of President Young—“plant our foot on the objection and crush it to atoms, but we construct on its very ruins the strongest argument in behalf of our system—an argument directed to the self-interest of the

* Combe on Education.

Universal Education a Pecuniary Gain.

community—an argument that appeals to one of the ruling passions of our nature, the love of wealth.”*

Can the objection be shown to be groundless? We meet it with a counter proposition, which, if it can be maintained, necessarily refutes it. Universal education—meaning thereby something more than the mere elements of knowledge—the sound, wise, thorough education of the whole community, so far from being expensive, is actually a gain, even in a pecuniary point of view, to any country where it is enjoyed.

Let us very briefly look at this position in a few of its various aspects. An undeniable connexion exists between the intelligence of a nation and its laws. There is a general fund of talent and information from which the accomplishments even of statesmen themselves are ultimately derived. Nor is the relation between a nation’s legislation

* The reader will observe that a part of this sentence is quoted from President Young, of Centre College, Ky. It is taken from an address, the object of which is to show that education is a pecuniary gain to a country. The author freely acknowledges his indebtedness to this enlightened friend and able advocate of the cause, for some of the topics relied upon under this head, and for several interesting and valuable facts and suggestions; though these bear but a small proportion to the whole of what he has advanced on this subject.

Its Effect on Legislation.

and its wealth less significant or obvious. Wise laws, by encouraging industry, quickening ingenuity, and securing the quiet enjoyment of their fruits, develop the resources of a country, and swell the tide of national prosperity and wealth. These are truths so clear that he that runs may read. They are derived from the plainest principles of reason, and confirmed by the voice of all history.

Universal education, then, is a pecuniary advantage to a nation, in the first place, by its effect on legislation. It would be easy to multiply proofs and illustrations of this most interesting truth. The argument is broad enough to fill a volume. The experience of all ages and nations might be made tributary in the gathering of materials for its construction. Who can calculate the riches often derived to a country from a judicious course of policy in relation to any one important interest, or even from the operation of a single wise law? In illustration of the former, take those extended systems of internal improvement, which have shed so much lustre on many of our states, and more than doubled their wealth. As an example of the latter, look at the law which secures to the author of any useful invention the pecuniary benefit resulting from the sale of the article invented. To what an amazing extent has it stimulated human

Character of the Laws depends on the Intelligence of the People.

ingenuity, and urged it on in the career of invention and discovery! And what arithmetic can calculate, what scale can measure, the activity and enterprize it has diffused through the community, the degree in which it has augmented the productive labour of the country, and the untold riches it has in this way poured into the lap of the nation?

This branch of the subject may be viewed in another aspect. We may select any period of the world—antiquity, the middle ages, or modern times—and compare the nations then existing with each other. We may compare, for example, in detail, England with France, France with Spain, Spain with Morocco, and Morocco itself with the kingdoms of interior Africa. We may institute a like process in reference to the same country at different periods of its history; as to Italy, for instance, before and after what is commonly termed the revival of learning. We may make our search into these matters as broad and as deep as we please; and what will be the result? We shall find, invariably, that those nations where the people have been best educated, have also been most distinguished for the wisdom of their laws, and have enjoyed a greater degree of prosperity, and reached a higher pitch of wealth than the others. It would be no labour for giants to

Testimony of History on this Point universally in its Favour.

pile Ossa upon Pelion, and to place them both on the top of Olympus, in the shape of proofs. But to do this would not harmonize with that character of generality to which the plan I have proposed to myself renders it necessary for me to adhere throughout these brief "Hints." I cannot, therefore, now stop to verify the assertion just made; but I make my appeal with confidence to history. Let my readers search it for themselves; and if they do not find that national prosperity and riches follow in the wake of education, as naturally as water seeks its level, or vapour ascends toward heaven, then have I read and studied in vain, and there is no one conclusion at which I have arrived, that I can rely upon with any confidence. But I am not—I cannot be mistaken. I would say, without hesitation, to any skeptic on this point—Carry your researches in reference to it in whatever direction, and push them to whatever extent you will, the result cannot but be a conviction, not to be shaken by the ingenuity of sophistry or the thunder of declamation, that the connection is not more inseparable between light and the sun, between the shadow and its object, than that which exists, and ever must exist, between national prosperity and good laws, and between wise legislation and general intelligence.

Ignorance in the Ban de la Roche on Oberlin's arrival.

Not to pass over this point, without one illustration of it, I would again call your attention to the scene of Oberlin's labours; a reference which will at the same time illustrate another way in which education is a pecuniary gain, viz. by increasing the capacity of each individual in the community, and enabling him to turn his powers to the best account. That extraordinary man was the patriarch of his people. He was their lawgiver, at least by the force of moral suasion, as well as their pastor, their temporal not less than their spiritual guide. Notwithstanding the praise-worthy labours of his excellent predecessor, Mr. Stouber, he found them, on his arrival at Waldebach, still sunk almost to the lowest level in the scale of moral and civil existence; scarcely, indeed, superior to the brutes in any thing but their susceptibility of improvement.

Their ignorance was such that their very school-masters could scarcely any of them write, and many could not read with fluency; and as to a knowledge of any thing else, they were nearly as ignorant as so many statues. Some idea of their condition may be formed from the following extract from Professor Halsey's "Memoirs of Oberlin." "They were alike destitute of the means of mental and social intercourse; they spoke a rude *patois*, resembling the Lorrain dialect, and the medium of no external information; they were

Its Effects. Oberlin's Labours. His Wisdom and Zeal.

entirely secluded from the neighbouring districts by the want of roads; the husbandmen were destitute of the most necessary agricultural implements, and had no means of procuring them; the provisions derived from the soil were not sufficient to maintain even a scanty population;" and the soil itself had so far deteriorated by use, and been so often swept away by the rain, from the rocks it covered, that fields that had formerly yielded from 120 to 150 bushels of potatoes, produced, in 1767, when Oberlin went to the Ban de la Roche, only from 20 to 50 bushels. These various causes, which, however, may all be traced to ignorance as their fruitful mother, had resulted in a degree of rudeness, indigence, and misery, absolutely appalling, and which rendered the task of improving them one of extreme difficulty, and of doubtful issue.

Nothing, however, could deter this excellent man from attempting their reform. He entered upon his work with the zeal of an apostle, and prosecuted it with the wisdom of a sage, and the patience of a devotee. He not only instructed them in religion and science, but he taught them agriculture and the mechanic arts, and indoctrinated them practically in the deepest principles of political economy; and he had the happiness of beholding, in the course of a few years, the most

Remarkable Change. Great Improvements. Effect on Population.

remarkable change, wrought through his instrumentality, that has perhaps ever occurred, in so brief a space, in the condition of an entire people. The rude mountaineers had exchanged their wretched hovels for neat and comfortable cottages, and their scanty rags for decent apparel; their barren rocks had been, by the transportation and deposit of soil upon them, converted into fruitful fields; manufactures of various kinds had been established; a small but prosperous commerce had been commenced; roads, of which, properly speaking, there were none before, had been constructed—schools established and perfected—an Agricultural Society formed, and numerous improvements in agriculture introduced—and various institutions founded which mark a somewhat advanced state of Christian civilization; and industry, contentment, and plenty, smiled throughout the valley, and cheered the abode of every cottager.

In confirmation of these statements, I ask your attention to the following extract from Professor Halsey's work:—

“Although on Oberlin's first arrival in the *Bande la Roche*,” says the biographer, “the population consisted of eighty or a hundred families only, it increased in the course of a few years to five

Establishment of Manufactures. Emoluments thence resulting.

or six hundred, constituting altogether three thousand souls.

"To provide employment for so great a number of persons, even supposing that five hundred could be employed during four or five months in the year in the cultivation of land, and that one third were infants and infirm persons incapable of work, became a most important object, and gave rise to the introduction of various branches of mechanical industry, adapted to local circumstances; such, for instance, as straw-platting, knitting, and dyeing with the plants of the country. The former was introduced by an invalid captain, whose gratitude for the kind reception he met with, on soliciting the hospitality of the generous pastor of Waldebach, induced him to proffer his services in furthering the views of his benefactor, by instructing the young persons in an art with which necessity had previously made him acquainted.

"Besides these employments, Oberlin had succeeded in introducing the spinning of cotton by the hand; and, as he gave prizes to the best spinners in addition to their wages, this branch of industry for a time succeeded so well that it once gained for the Ban de la Roche, in the course of a single year, and from one manufacturer, the emolument of thirty-two thousand francs—an

Mr. Legrand. Silk-Riband Manufactory Established.

enormous sum, considering the extreme poverty and indigence to which the inhabitants had just before been subjected. Weaving followed, and, notwithstanding numerous obstacles, promised a large increase of pecuniary means; but, unfortunately, the introduction of machinery at Schirmeck and some of the surrounding villages, produced an entire revolution about the time the preceding letter was written, deprived them of this source of maintenance, and seemed likely to reduce them to their former state of necessity and want.

“During this emergency, Mr. Legrand, of Basle, formerly one of the Directors of the Helvetic Republic, attracted to the Ban de la Roche by regard and affection for its pastor, and the simplicity, intelligence, and integrity of his parishioners, persuaded his two sons, to whom he had relinquished business, to remove their manufactory of silk ribands from the Department of the Upper Rhine to Foudai, believing that its introduction in the Steinthal, by giving employ to a great many hands, would become not only an advantage but a real blessing to the peasantry there, who were at this period sadly in need of work.

“In the course of a short time, through the exertions of this benevolent and highly respectable

Its Effect on Industry—on Morals. Intellectual Culture.

family, industry and happiness again smiled in the valley :—for whilst the introduction of the silk manufactory caused trade to be carried on with renewed vigour, and gave employment to several hundred hands, it was attended with another great advantage, too seldom experienced in great manufacturing districts; this was that the riband looms were distributed about the houses in the different villages, so that, contrary to the usual custom, the children could remain whilst at work under the eye of their parents, instead of being exposed to the contaminating influence of bad example.

“ ‘Conducted by Providence,’ says Mr. Legrand, in a letter addressed to the Baron de Gerando, ‘into this remote valley, I was the more struck with the sterility of its soil, its straw-thatched cottages, the apparent poverty of its inhabitants, and the simplicity of their fare, from the contrast which these external appearances formed to the cultivated conversation which I enjoyed with almost every individual I met with whilst traversing its five villages, and the frankness and *naïvete* of the children, who extended to me their little hands. I had often heard of Pastor Oberlin, and eagerly sought his acquaintance. He gave me the most hospitable reception, and anticipated my desire to know more of the history of

Mr. Legrand's Testimony. Triumph of Education.

the little colony, whose manners had surprised me so greatly, by placing in my hands the annals of his parish.

“ ‘ It is now four years since I removed here with my family ; and the pleasure of residing in the midst of a people, whose manners are softened and whose minds are enlightened by the instructions which they receive from their earliest infancy, more than reconciles us to the privations which we must necessarily experience in a valley separated from the rest of the world by a chain of surrounding mountains.’ ”

Behold in the simple annals of that remote valley, the triumph of good education ! Contemplate the countless blessings and the sublime hopes it confers upon its possessors ; blessings which make up the sum of human happiness below—hopes which stretch beyond the dark and troubled horizon that bounds our earthly prospects, and are anchored fast to the Eternal Throne ! Read, moreover, this important lesson—important certainly to the political economist—that it is a pecuniary, as well as moral gain, to any community where it is enjoyed !

Universal education would, in the next place, be a pecuniary gain to the country, by diminishing expensive amusements and checking sensual indulgences. I refer here particularly to theatres,

Universal Education would diminish hurtful Amusements and Indulgences.

circuses, gaming, horse-racing, licentiousness, and intemperance. It must be admitted that we have no means of coming accurately at the facts in regard to any of these vices ; and with respect to that which has most prominently occupied public attention—intemperance—a degree of exaggeration and romancing has been indulged in, which has done real injury to the cause it was designed to promote. Nevertheless, it will not be questioned by any reflecting man, that, *if we could come at the facts*, it would appear that each of these gratifications costs the nation every year its hundreds of thousands of dollars, and some of them many millions; and that, if the whole annual expense to the United States of amusements either frivolous or hurtful, and of indulgences that demoralise and degrade our nature, could be ascertained and held up to public view, the amount would be such as to astound every imagination, and appal every heart.

Although we cannot fortify our argument by a long array of well digested and well authenticated arithmetical tables, we may mention a single fact, which will furnish ground for a reasonable conjecture as to the expense of the so called “schools of morality,” in the city of New York. An intelligent gentleman made the circuit of the theatrical establishments in that city, on an evening of no ex-

Enormous Expense of Theatres in the City of New York.

traordinary attractions, and during the severity of the pressure on the money market. He was at some pains to calculate the numbers in attendance, and he came to the conclusion that not less than four thousand five hundred dollars had been received that night as admission money. At a moderate calculation, an additional five hundred dollars—probably much more—must have been expended in the purchase of liquors and refreshments. If we take this as an average night—and, considering the circumstances, it would seem not unfair to do so—and fix the number of nights on which the theatres are open at two hundred a year, the annual expense, to the city of New York alone, of these seminaries of vice—these receptacles and propagators of corruption—these gilded sepulchres filled with the bones of perished virtue and honour, will be one million of dollars; an amount greater by nearly a third than the whole sum paid to common school teachers, in the entire State of New York, in the year 1834. And this is but one item in the long and fearful account. Add to it gaming, horse-racing, impurity, intemperance, and a host of kindred gratifications, and the aggregate expense of them in that city alone would, it can scarcely be doubted, exceed in amount all that is expended on common schools in the whole United States.

Education a saving in this respect. Some think otherwise.

Now I neither say nor think that all the money that is at present thrown away on such objects as these, would be converted to other and better uses by the universal diffusion of education; neither, on the other hand, can it be reasonably doubted that a great part of it, perhaps more than one half, would be saved to the community by the establishment and maintenance of good schools—such schools as religion, humanity, and sound policy demand.

I am aware that there are those who entertain the opinion that education, however thorough or widely diffused, would not tend to diminish amusements, and especially theatres. They appeal in support of this opinion to the history of Rome and the Grecian republics, the most intellectual and highly cultivated nations of ancient times; and yet, say they, the theatre not only existed and flourished among them, but the fondness of the people for theatrical representations amounted to an actual passion. I admit the main facts on which the reasoning of these men is based—viz. the civilization and theatrical taste of the ancient Greeks and Romans;* but I submit, with all de-

* In admitting the general civilization, or at least the general education of the Romans, I yield more than could be demanded, and more than is warranted by the facts. The Roman *people*,

The Spirit of Christianity and of Theatres opposite to each other.

ference, that their reasoning itself is wholly erroneous. Their conclusion is drawn from a false analogy. I shall have occasion, in the progress of these "Hints," to specify the nature of the education I would recommend; but it may be proper here to observe, in passing, that I am firmly of the opinion that no education, not founded on and impregnated with the genuine principles of the Christian religion, would be worth the labour and expense involved in its attainment. And is it possible that any man, who knows whereof he affirms, can maintain that the spirit of Christianity and the spirit of theatres—especially as they are at present conducted—are in harmony with each other? or that the prevalence of the one would not be the decrease of the other? "Try the spirits whether they be of God;"—try them by any test that ever occurred to man or angel. The ingenuity of the arch fiend himself would fail to discover, I will not say an identity, but even a sympathy between them. They are as wide asunder, as inconsistent

properly speaking, were *never* an educated people. On the contrary, various decrees of the senate exist, the design of which was to prevent the education of the common people. But I am content to yield this point, as I have done in the text, for the sake of argument,—being persuaded that the position I have taken is a sound one, and that it needs no support from this source.

Proved by a priori reasoning. By the History of the ancient Jews.

with each other, as antagonistical in their nature, as light and darkness—as virtue and vice—as Christ and Belial. This, I suppose, will hardly be controverted. The only question which remains, then, is, whether a wise Christian education has a natural tendency to diffuse Christian principles, to strengthen the Christian spirit, and to promote the practice of the Christian virtues. To argue this question in a Christian community would be little less than to trifle with the feelings, or insult the understanding, of its members. To maintain the negative of it would be to contend for a proposition, which, if true, would reverse the order of things, rupture the connexion between cause and effect, and unsettle the foundations of all our knowledge.

But if, leaving this *a priori* course of reasoning, we would gather up the facts of experience, and draw our inferences from them, no example occurs to me, so fully in point, as that of the ancient Jews. They were the chosen people of Jehovah, the objects of his peculiar care, the witnesses of stupendous miracles wrought for their special deliverance and preservation, and EDUCATED upon principles of divine inculcation. And how stood the case with them? Among all the means appointed by Divine Wisdom for the attainment of a stern and rigorous virtue, the modern “schools of mo-

The Theatre unknown among the Jews.

rality" found no place. The theatre was actually unknown among the ancient Israelites. They had their amusements, it is true; and often of a highly exhilarating and cheerful kind. But their very pastimes were tinctured with the spirit of religion, and some of them even were of the nature of religious observances. And we have the authority of divine revelation for affirming that, when Christian education shall have become universal, such will be the grasp and energy of the devotional spirit, that it will invest every object and pursuit with an atmosphere of sanctity;—"every pot in Jerusalem shall be holy, and upon the bells of the horses shall be inscribed, Holiness to the Lord."

I must apologize to you for the last two paragraphs. They were not originally in the work; and were introduced only after the objection they attempt to meet had been actually urged by an intelligent and excellent friend, to whom the first copy had been submitted. We will now return to the thread of the argument, as left at the point just indicated.

It is easy to perceive *how* education would tend to diminish the amusements and indulgences specified, and others of a like character with them. The explanation cannot be bet-

How Education would diminish improper Amusements and Indulgences.

ter given than in the words of a late eminent divine.*

"By multiplying the mental resources, it has a tendency to exalt the character, and in some measure to correct and subdue the taste for gross sensuality. It enables the possessor to beguile his leisure moments, (and every man has such,) in an innocent at least, if not in a useful manner. The poor man who can read, and who possesses a taste for reading, can find entertainment at home, without being tempted to repair elsewhere for that purpose. His mind can find employment while his body is at rest; he does not lie prostrate and afloat on the current of incidents, liable to be carried whithersoever the impulse of appetite may direct. There is in the mind of such a man an intellectual spring, urging him to the pursuit of *mental* good; and if the minds of his family also are a little cultivated, conversation becomes the more interesting, and the sphere of domestic enjoyment is enlarged. The calm satisfaction which books afford, puts him into a disposition to relish more exquisitely the tranquil delight inseparable from the indulgence of the social affections. He who is inured to reflection will carry his views be-

* Robert Hall.

Amusements of a different kind recommended.

yond the present hour ; he will extend his prospect a little into futurity, and be disposed to make some provision for his approaching wants ; whence will result an increased motive to industry, together with a care to husband his earnings, and to avoid unnecessary expense. The poor man who has gained a taste for good books, will in all likelihood become thoughtful ; and when you have given to the poor a habit of thinking, you have conferred on them a much greater favour than by the gift of a large sum of money, since you have put them in possession of the *principle* of all legitimate prosperity.”*

* Some, there may be, who, drawing their inferences as prejudice or caprice dictates, rather than upon the principles of right reason, will charge me here with waging an indiscriminate warfare upon all amusements. Such would do me arrant injustice. On the contrary, I think that, as a nation, we are deficient in amusements. The gay, the frivolous, the idle, the vicious, and the worldly, have, it is true, their pastimes of a certain kind, and indulge in them to excess ; but there is a great dearth among us of those rational amusements, which are conducive alike to moral, to intellectual, and to physical health ; and which both the philosopher and the Christian can approve and commend. Music, that inexhaustible resource for the leisure hours of all classes in Germany and other European countries, if cultivated here, would become, in multitudes of cases, a refuge from *ennui*, and a safeguard against costly and ruinous gratifications. Parties consisting of two or three families might occasionally be found to

Amusements indispensable. Ought to be provided for by the Good.

An adequate system of popular education would, in the third place, diminish the spirit—and, con-

spend a day in the open fields, where they might enjoy together the exquisite beauties of nature, and partake of the invigorating repast beneath the shade of ancient trees, reclining upon the green velvet of nature's own forming, fanned by the sweet and pure breath of heaven, and lulled and soothed by the mingled music of birds and streamlets. Such parties would partake somewhat of the nature of the feast of tabernacles among the ancient Israelites, and of the De Vega excursions of the Spaniards of our own times. They would strengthen the social affections, promote the growth of the social virtues, and impart real instruction, especially to the younger members of the party, while they afforded to all pleasures of the purest, most healthful, and most elevating kind. The young might be usefully amused by visiting manufactories, inspecting various kinds of machinery, and beholding the endlessly diversified results of human ingenuity. The social circle, the air-balloon, the camera obscura upon a large scale, the more brilliant of the experiments in chemistry and natural philosophy, the wonders of the world beneath and the worlds above us, as revealed by the microscope and the telescope,—all these might be made to blend amusement and instruction, and would afford recreations worthy of immortal and accountable beings. Nor am I disposed to deny that the drama itself, if cultivated, not for purposes of gain, but for the entertainment of select circles of friends and acquaintances, and enacted by amateurs instead of professed actors, might be made a source of pure and instructive amusement.

Amusement of some kind seems indispensable to our nature, and men will have it at any cost, whether of morals or money. And if the friends of order and virtue, the rightful guardians of the public morals, will not provide for this instinctive and irre-

Education diminishes Litigation. Promotes Peace and Forbearance.

sequently, the expense—of litigation. One principal object of education is to teach men their duty, and to supply motives to the performance of it. If this were properly done with respect to all the youth of our land, if just sentiments with regard to revenge and the forgiveness of injuries were early, and earnestly, and perseveringly inculcated, if that cardinal principle of human intercourse—Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you—were unfolded to their understanding and impressed upon their heart, by men respected for their learning, and beloved for their virtues, would it not tend to promote those dispositions, so beautifully described by Paul as the “ornaments of a meek and quiet spirit?” Can it be doubted that the effect of such training would be to strengthen the bonds of universal brotherhood,

pressible craving of the soul, multitudes of others stand ready to do it, and to make merchandize of the health, the happiness, and the souls of their fellow-men. I am forcibly reminded here of an anecdote I saw a few years ago of an interview between an American scholar and a professor in the university of Palermo, in Sicily. The Sicilian inquired of the American what were the pastimes of our literary men? The latter replied, “They have none.” “No wonder then,” said the other, “that they languish for a few years in feeble health, and then die prematurely. I could not live without spending two or three hours every day at my piano.”

Education saves by diminishing Pauperism and Criminal Prosecutions.

and thus to diminish the number of lawsuits by preventing the occasions of them? It would also tend to the same result in a different way. It would make men better acquainted with the principles of law and justice, increase their confidence in each other's judgment, and cause them more frequently, when disputes did arise, to resort to the less expensive, and often more equitable mode, of settling them by arbitration.

Again: The thorough education of all the people would be an annual saving to the nation of many millions of dollars by its tendency to diminish pauperism, and to lessen the number of criminal prosecutions. By whom are our prisons and poor-houses now filled to overflowing? A reference to the statistics of crime and poverty will show that it is almost exclusively by those whose intellects have never been enlightened by knowledge, and whose hearts lack that moral culture, which good education always bestows. Pour the light of science into the minds of the whole community, and imbue them early with the principles of religion, and more than one-half of those edifices which are now devoted to the reception of convicts and paupers, might be either pulled down, or devoted to some purpose, I will not say *better*, for nothing better can be done while such classes exist among us, but at least to some use, which

It would increase the Capacity of each Individual in the Community.

would not be a perpetual monument of our degeneracy, and upon whose causes, as well as consequences, we could reflect without a sigh or a blush.

Another way in which universal education would promote the wealth of the country, is by increasing the capacity of each individual in the community, by enabling all to turn their powers to the best account, and by adding something to the average duration of human life. The first part of this proposition is very much of the character of an axiom. It is a law of our nature, as well established, and as generally admitted, as any other, that all our capacities, whether of mind or body, are improved by exercise and culture. This law of exercise is of universal application,—extending, as it has been well remarked, from the energy of a muscle, to the highest intellectual and moral faculties. And that he whose powers have been developed by education, whose faculties have been trained by exercise, and whose general capacity both for planning and executing is thereby and therefore enlarged, can accomplish more in a given time than another who is inferior to him in these respects, is one of those principles which cannot be proved by reasoning, because there are no other principles of more obvious and admitted correctness upon which it can repose. It is a

It would enable all to turn their Powers to the best Account.

truth which, when first enunciated, strikes the mind as self-evident ; and which, therefore, admits only that kind of proof, which is termed illustration. It would be an easy task to fill many pages in illustrating this position ; but this would be a waste of time, strength, and paper. Illustration, all-sufficient, must be in the memory of every man of observation. Who does not know, who has not seen, that, in every pursuit of life, those who are most skilful, are also, almost without exception, most successful in amassing wealth ? But he who yields this point, yields the whole argument. Skill, in any business or profession, is nothing other than that complex result consequent upon the appropriate training of our faculties, the harmonious development of our various animal, mental, and moral powers.

That an education of all the people, sufficiently comprehensive in its range of studies, and of a proper character in other respects, would have considerable effect in prolonging human life, will not, gentlemen, be questioned by you, nor, I apprehend, by any one else, after duly weighing existing facts, and the natural operation of cause and effect. It is an undeniable fact, that the average duration of life is far greater in civilized than in savage countries. It is impossible to ascertain

It would prolong Human Life. How this Result would follow.

the exact ratio of duration, owing to the difficulty of obtaining statistics on any subject among barbarous tribes; but it is thought by some that civilized men live nearly twice as long as savages. What is the fair inference from this remarkable fact? Certainly, that there is some quality in knowledge, the tendency of which is to prolong human existence. What is this quality? Is it so subtle as to elude our search, and baffle our efforts to grasp it? I think not. Unless I am deceived, it will be found in this—viz.—that knowledge, and especially Christian knowledge, forms habits, creates a moral atmosphere, establishes a state of society, favourable to the result actually occurring. Temperance in all things, cheerful industry, innocent recreation, and a quiet conscience, are among the most important conditions of long life. And has it not been already shown, to the satisfaction of all candid persons, that good education tends, directly and powerfully, to produce all these effects? But besides this, such education as I could desire to see made universal, would diffuse a general knowledge of the more direct laws of health; and this knowledge, though of comparatively little avail while existing only in isolated cases, when communicated to the whole mass of society, and instilled, practically as well as theoretically,

Universal Education would quicken ingenuity, and promote Inventions.

from early childhood, could not be altogether inoperative.*

Again: A system of universal and sound education would tend to quicken ingenuity, and thus to promote those inventions and discoveries, by the application of which to the arts of life the wealth of individuals and of nations is incalculably augmented. Men without education, or with comparatively little, may, by some fortunate accident—as the principle of making glass is said to have been discovered by some Syrian fishermen—or, by the mere force of original talent—as Pascal, while yet a youth, and before he had even heard of Euclid, actually rediscovered the science of geometry—such persons, I say, may, by possibility, stumble upon some undiscovered principle, or strike out some new idea, which may be applied to purposes of great and general utility. But it is impossible that such cases should be of frequent occurrence. I hardly remember more than the two already cited as examples; and even as to these, the former is somewhat apocryphal, and

* The author is happy to have these views confirmed by the opinion of so competent a physiologist as Dr. J. K. Mitchell, of Philadelphia;—who combines, in an eminent degree, general science and professional merit, with those more elegant accomplishments which mark the man of letters and the gentleman.

Knowledge as well as Genius necessary to fit men for inventing.

it may well be questioned whether the latter is exactly a case in point.* Some previous knowledge and mental discipline, as well as genius, some acquaintance with the principles of science, are necessary to fit men for originating those curious combinations of thought, and pursuing those felicitous trains of experiment, which penetrate into the secrets of nature and the regions of invention, and bring back those bloodless trophies, which shed a real glory on our race, which exalt our conceptions of the power and dignity of the human mind, and which multiply, beyond expression, our comforts and our gains.

History, so far as its voice is heard at all on this subject, will fully bear me out in this position. Almost all the valuable discoveries and inventions on record have been made by educated men—self-educated, it may be, and struggling amid neglect or contumely, against obstacles insuperable by less resolute minds, till they have brought their labours to a happy termination;—and those nations where the general intellect has been most cultivated, and the light of science most widely dif-

* Paschal, though he knew nothing of geometry, was far from being uneducated. His father was one of the most eminent mathematicians in France, whose house was the constant resort of learned men.

History confirms this. Comparison between England and France.

fused, have also been most distinguished for the number of their labour-saving machines, and for their improvements in the various branches of industry, by which wealth is accumulated. It is chiefly through the use of machinery that modern nations have been enabled so immeasurably to outstrip those of ancient times in riches; and it is by the same means that one nation now surpasses another in this respect.

In illustration of this point, President Young has made a comparison, founded upon the statistics of Baron Dupin, between the commercial and manufacturing condition of England and France. From this calculation it appears that the muscular force employed in commerce and manufactures in those two countries is about equal, being in each equivalent, in round numbers, to the power of six millions of men. Thus, if the productive enterprise of the two countries depended solely upon the animate power employed, France ought to be as great a commercial and manufacturing country as England. But the English, by means of machinery, have increased their force to a power equal to that of twenty-five millions of men, while the French have only raised theirs to that of eleven millions. England, then, owing to her superiority in discovering and inventing, has more than quadrupled her power of men and horses; France, on

England's Gain over France by her Inventions and Discoveries.

the other hand, has not quite doubled hers. "Is it," the learned President then pertinently inquires, "is it now any wonder that these islanders, with a narrower territory, smaller population, and less genial climate, should immensely outstrip their less intelligent and ingenious neighbour? And can we conceive a stronger proof of the actual pecuniary gain, that accrues to a nation from cultivating the intellect of her sons, than is furnished by such a fact?"

Let us look a little into this fact, to ascertain, if possible, how much England gains by her superiority in this matter over France. The actual commercial and manufacturing power of the latter country is only two-fifths of that of the former. The present annual value of the cotton manufacture in Great Britain, according to the Encyclopædia Britannica, is estimated to be about thirty-five millions of pounds sterling. Three-fifths of that sum, or more than twenty millions of pounds, is England's clear gain over her less skilful rival—an amount more than three times as great as the whole present annual revenue of the United States. And for this vast and ever increasing tide of prosperity, England is clearly indebted to popular education, which is the parent of intelligence, and the ultimate cause of all those improvements in the cotton manufacture, by which these amazing results have been secured.

British Cotton Trade. Middleton's Plan for supplying London with Water.

There is a striking fact connected with the British East India cotton trade, which illustrates the wonderful superiority, in respect to their command over the elements of wealth, of those nations where the common mind is developed and stimulated by education. The manufacture of cotton goods was commenced in the East Indies, and for a long time, cotton fabrics were imported from that country into England. Now, however, in consequence of the introduction of machinery into England, and the perfection to which it has been brought, British manufacturers purchase the raw material in India, transport it seven thousand miles by water, pay a heavy duty to the state upon it, convert it into cloth, and then send it back again, and actually undersell the natives* in their own market.

The ingenuity of a single intellect, which might have slept for ever in ignorance and inactivity but for the influence of education, sometimes saves a nation more than it would cost to educate thoroughly all her sons. About a century ago, Hugh Middleton devised a plan for supplying London with pure water. It is estimated that a supply of

* The same rude hand-looms are still employed by them in the manufacture of cotton, which were used by their ancestors many centuries ago.

Immense Saving by it. Application of Steam to Boats and Cars.

wholesome water for that metropolis, if furnished by hauling, the method originally in use, would cost nine millions of pounds sterling. By Middleton's plan it costs considerably less than half a million. Thus London has, by one invention, been saved an annual expense, in the article of water alone, of more than eight and a half millions of pounds sterling, or about forty millions of dollars. This sum is more than enough to maintain good schools in the whole of England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Education, such as it exists at present among us, has already, by the inventions and discoveries of which it has been the source, increased the riches of this nation to an extent incalculably beyond all that the best system would have cost us. The application of steam to the propulsion of boats and railroad-cars, is alone more than sufficient to justify this remark. "It has already done more for every state in this union than all the power of industry, working by the old methods, could have effected for it in a hundred years. It has filled our houses with the productions of every country and climate, and has raised the price of every acre of our land, and almost every article of our produce." These are its direct consequences: but it has produced collateral effects, scarcely less auspicious to the prosperity and riches of the

The Cotton Cultivator. Card-making Machine. Cotton Gin.

country, in the powerful impulse it has given to commerce, manufactures, agriculture, and all other branches of industry, by which men seek to create or to augment their fortunes.

But the advantages of the application of steam to these purposes, great as they are, scarcely bear a proportion to the aggregate of benefits derived from innumerable other inventions and discoveries. An instrument, called the cotton cultivator, has recently been invented, for thinning and weeding cotton, which, it is estimated, will perform the work of twenty men. I cannot, for want of the necessary data, which are not accessible to me where I write, enter into statements to show how much labour and expense are annually saved to the United States by Whittimore's card-making machine, and Whitney's cotton gin; but the amount must be immense. Who can tell how much is saved to the husbandman, and the extent to which his gains are increased, by the use of the patent rake, and of the reaping and threshing machines, and by the invention and improvement of various other instruments for facilitating his labours?

We cannot, however, descend to particulars. The ingenuity of our countrymen has been directed, and often with the most gratifying results, to

Various other Inventions. Their Effect on National Prosperity.

the invention of power-multiplying* machines, in every branch of human industry. A mere catalogue of the patents granted by the United States would fill several volumes. And to what are we indebted for this vast mass of labour-saving machinery, this multitude that can scarcely be numbered, of instruments for the accumulation of wealth? I reply unhesitatingly,—To the development of the popular mind by education.

But the intellect of this people is not cultivated to one fourth—scarcely, perhaps, to one eighth—the extent that it would be by the adoption of a wise system of universal education. And who can calculate the results,—what imagination can set limits to the pecuniary advantages that would accrue to the country, if useful inventions and discoveries were multiplied fourfold? What multitudes, it has been well asked, would then benefit society by their ingenuity, who now curse it with their vices? How many Franklins, and Fultons, and Rittenhouses would rise up to bless the world, if

* I employ this word according to popular usage. I am well aware that it is not scientifically correct. There is really no such thing in art as an increased result, without a corresponding increase in the producing power. All that the most complex and ingenious machinery can do, is to concentrate power, to change its direction, or in some way to modify its action.

Governor Everett's beautiful Eulogium on the Time-Piece.

the beams of knowledge were poured upon every mind, to kindle the flame of slumbering genius! But if the education of all the children of a state for centuries raised up only one such discoverer as Fulton, or Watt, or Arkwright, without yielding another advantage, the country would be immensely a gainer by the outlay.*

* I introduce in this place, partly because it serves as a measure to enforce my own argument, but more on account of its great beauty of style and thought, the following extract from Governor Everett's Address before the Massachusetts Charitable Association, descriptive of the value of that ingenious little instrument, which marks the progress of time. "Consider," says he, "the influence on the affairs of men, in all their relations, of the invention of the little machine which I hold in my hand, and the other modern instrument for the measurement of time, various specimens of which are on exhibition in the halls. To say nothing of the importance of an accurate measurement of time in astronomical observations, nothing of the application of time-keepers to the purposes of navigation—how vast must be the aggregate effect on the affairs of life, throughout the civilized world; and, in the progress of ages, of a convenient and portable apparatus for measuring the lapse of time! Who can calculate in how many of those critical junctures when the affairs of weightiest import hang upon the issue of an hour, prudence and forecast have triumphed over blind casualty, by being enabled to measure with precision the flight of time, in its smallest subdivisions!

"Is it not something more than mere mechanism, which watches with us by the sick bed of some dear friend, through the

Education increases our Command over the Products of Nature.

Finally, on this branch of the argument, the diffusion of sound and suitable education among all the members of a community, would enable them to push their researches to an indefinite extent into the powers and productions of physical nature, to subject these mighty agents to their will, and to render them subservient to the purposes of gain. Here are two distinct and prolific sources or instruments of wealth—the powers of nature and

livelong solitude of night, enabling us to count, in the slaekening pulse, Nature's trembling steps towards recovery, and to administer the prescribed remedy at the precise, perhaps the critical moment of its application ! By means of a watch, punctuality in all his duties, which in its perfection is one of the incomunicable attributes of Deity, is brought, in no mean measure, within the reach of man. He is enabled, if he will be guided by this, to imitate that sublime precision which led the earth, after a circuit of five hundred millions of miles, back to the solstice at the appointed moment without the loss of one second, no, not the millionth part of a second, for the ages on ages during which it has travelled that road. What a miracle of art, that a man can teach a few brass wheels, and a little piece of elastic steel, to outcalculate himself; to give him a rational answer to one of the most important questions which a being travelling towards eternity can ask ! What a miracle that a man can put within this little machine a spirit that measures the flight of time with greater accuracy than the unassisted intellect of the profoundest philosopher ; which watches and moves when sleep palsies alike the hand of the maker and the mind of the contriver, nay, when the last sleep has come over them both."

Man encompassed with a vast Assemblage of Powers.

the productions of nature—over each of which the best educated, whether individuals or nations, have the greatest command, and can most readily and effectually turn them to account in the pursuit of riches. The connexion here specified, viz. between education and the ability to make nature herself the minister of wealth, if not received exactly as an axiom, will, I suppose, be generally acknowledged as a truth already sufficiently established by experience. All that is necessary, then, to our present purpose is to give a few exemplifications of the value of this power, in other words, the extent to which it may be applied for promoting the end supposed;—to place, as it were, an occasional buoy, indicating the channel through which the thoughts and investigations of those must flow who would come to a full understanding of the pecuniary benefits to be derived from this source.

If we look around us to ascertain our true position and circumstances, we shall find ourselves encompassed with a vast assemblage of powers,* which all bear some relation to the human intelligence, and many of which are susceptible of

* And there are doubtless many others still hid in the womb of nature, which science will yet bring to light, and art apply to beneficial ends.

All those Powers related to the Human Intelligence. The Loadstone.

being, in some way and to some extent, controlled and converted to our use, by art and skill. There is a mysterious power in the earth, which draws the loadstone always towards the same point. The discovery of this power, and the application of it to the construction of the magnetic needle and the mariner's compass, have made the ocean the highway of nations—the ocean, that liquid plain without line or landmark, which stretches over half the globe, and which suffers the mightiest ships to cut their way through its waters without leaving the least traces of their progress. Had not the intelligence of man—an intelligence, be it always remembered, drawn forth by education—made this secret influence subservient to his purposes, what would now be the state of commerce; what the condition of this mighty continent; what our knowledge of remote countries; what the civilization of the world?* It would require a volume, nay, almost a library, to develope in detail all the effects, having either a direct or a remote relation to the acquisition of wealth, of this wonderful

* How, indeed, without it, could the gospel be carried to the “uttermost parts of the earth?” and the last command of a suffering Saviour be fulfilled? But I did not introduce this consideration into the text, because it is not pertinent to the argument in hand.

Gravitation. Expansive Power of Heat—Application to Business of Life.

principle, and the instruments which have been invented to render it available for human use.

There is another mysterious power in the earth, which causes all bodies on or near its surface to tend towards the centre. It is this principle which makes water seek its level, and descend in streams from more elevated regions towards the ocean. But educated intelligence enables man to stay the torrent in its course, to turn it from its channel, to appropriate its moving force, and thus to make it grind his corn, manufacture his cloth, print his books, forge his iron, spin his thread, and perform many other useful and profitable services.

There is a hidden influence or power, in heat, which causes almost all known substances to expand, and liquids in the process of expansion to assume the gaseous form. To what endless uses, in the business of life, has not civilized and educated man applied this simple principle? He has employed it to measure the state of the atmosphere, to blast the rocks with which he rears his cities, to move the “floating palace” through the water, to send the richly freighted car careering through the air, to give intensity to his destructive energies in the wars he wages with his enemies, and to set machinery of all kinds and for all purposes in motion.

Knowledge is truly Power. Man's Interest lies in Knowing.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth," and no human power can change its direction. But can man do nothing with it? Yes; he can and does. He spreads his canvass to the gale, catches a portion of the moving element, and traverses by its aid the broadest oceans for purposes of traffic and of gain.

"In such a state of things," as Mr. Combe well remarks, "knowledge is truly power; and it is obviously the *interest* of human beings to become acquainted with the constitution and relations of every object around them, that they may discover its capabilities of ministering to their advantage. Farther,—where these physical energies are too great to be controlled, man has received intelligence, by which he may observe their course, and accommodate his conduct to their influence. This capacity of adaptation is a valuable substitute for the power of regulating them by his will. Man cannot arrest the sun in its course, so as to avert the wintry storm and cause perpetual spring to bloom around him; but, by the proper exercise of his intelligence and corporeal energies, he is able to foresee the approach of bleak skies and rude winds, and to place himself in safety from their injurious effects. These powers of controlling nature, and of accommodating his conduct to its course, are the direct re-

Knowledge of the Productions of Nature advantageous.

sults of his rational faculties ; and in proportion to their cultivation is his sway extended. If the rain fall, and the wind blow, and the ocean billows lash against the mere animal, it must endure them all ; because it cannot control their action, nor protect itself by art from their power. Man, while ignorant, continues in a condition almost equally helpless. But let him put forth his proper human capacities, [and cultivate the faculties with which his Creator has endowed him,] and he then finds himself invested with the power to rear, to build, to fabricate, and to store up provisions ; and, by availing himself of these resources, and accommodating his conduct to the course of nature's laws," he is able not only to obtain a competency, but to amass wealth, and may "smile in safety beside the cheerful hearth, when the elements maintain their fiercest war abroad."

A well educated community does not possess a less striking advantage over an ignorant one in their knowledge of the *productions* of nature, their ability to increase this knowledge indefinitely, and their power of making it tell on the public prosperity. This position is susceptible of interesting and forcible illustration from the geological surveys recently made, or now in progress, in several of the states of this union. Who, till then, had formed any conception of the varied and inexhaustible

Geological Surveys. Mineral Wealth. Monmouth County.

mineral resources of this country? And who now can tell the yet undiscovered riches embowelled in our mountains, or sleeping undisturbed, because unknown, beneath the surface of our valleys? It is but a few years since that Monmouth county, in New-Jersey, was one of the poorest counties in the state. The real estate there is now worth more than in any other county in our commonwealth. Whence this change? It is owing solely to the discovery and use of marl by the farmers. Lands in that county worth, five years ago, no more than from five to ten dollars an acre, are now valued at a hundred dollars; and the farmers who own them are all making fortunes.

But more space has already been devoted to this division of these "Hints" than was originally intended; and I forbear pursuing the train of thought suggested by this topic. You will, however, I trust, excuse one illustration of the point under consideration. It is taken from the history of the Ban de la Roche, which has already been repeatedly referred to as full of excellent and various instruction. Before Oberlin went to that district, its inhabitants had subsisted almost entirely on a sort of wild potatoes, which their exhausted soil produced in very scanty quantities. Oberlin, having a thorough knowledge of botany, instructed his people in the properties of their

Illustrated by Oberlin's People.

indigenous plants. Among them were the stripe-flowered cabbage; common chickweed; water mouse-eared chickweed; common goose-foot; common dandelion; mountain willow-herb; butter-cup; yellow dead nettle; white dead nettle; common hop; red pimpernel; great plaintain; upright crow-foot; twisted snake-weed; common sorrel; lamb's lettuce; bladder campion; water cress; and corn cockle. These common plants, which they had trodden under foot from generation to generation, without dreaming that they were of any value, they now learned to use in a variety of ways to increase their comforts and add to their means of living.

These are mere specimens of the various ways in which an acquaintance with the powers and productions of nature may contribute to the acquisition of wealth. They are not given as a full, or scarcely a partial, illustration of the subject; but they may serve as a starting point to the reader's own reflections, and as landmarks to indicate the track which his investigations must take in order to a full and just appreciation of the pecuniary advantages which may accrue to a nation from this source.

The connexion of sound popular education with the purity and perpetuity of its political institutions, was the third consideration suggested as

Solemn Trust Committed to our Citizens. Influence of our Example.

showing that it is the duty of a free state to make adequate legal provision for the instruction of all her children. The discussion of this topic will now claim your attention; but only for a very brief space.

To the citizens of the United States is committed the solemn charge of perpetuating that liberty, and of maintaining those institutions, civil, social, literary, and religious, which it cost our fathers so much blood and treasure to establish;—institutions, which are at once the pride of our own country and the hope of the world. Yes—and I say it in no spirit of vain-glorious boasting, but with a deep impression of the responsibility which our position involves—we stand upon an eminence such as few nations have ever occupied. We are as a city set on a hill, whose light cannot be hid. The eyes of the world are upon us,—one portion regarding us with anxious but trembling hope, the other with a fiendish desire to see our fair prospects blasted, our honour prostrate in the dust, and our greatness and very existence among the things that were. Be assured, be assured, that our fall will be the triumph of despotism, and the knell of liberty throughout the world. The same pile of ruins in which our constitution lies entombed, will cover the ardent hopes and cherished expectations of the friends of freedom every where.

Our Political Fabric endangered by the Facility with which Foreigners Vote,

To maintain our free institutions, then, and to transmit them unimpaired to posterity, is no light trust, to be committed to rash hands and rasher heads. It is pregnant with the fate of empires. In its issue, are involved, for ages to come, the happiness or misery of a large portion of the civilized world. It is a trust most solemn in its nature, and the due execution of which demands, in every citizen, knowledge and judgment, as well as patriotism and vigilance.

It is not to be disguised that our political fabric is encompassed with dangers, and that there are elements of destruction at work among us, which, if left to operate without check or control, will ere long cause it to totter to its fall. I speak not this as a politician. The dangers to which I allude spring from our circumstances. They are inherent in our political organization as a nation, and our moral constitution as men. They would therefore exist, whatever party might chance to have the ascendancy for the time being. These dangers are numerous and multiform; but the two whose influence is most to be dreaded are, in my opinion, the facility with which foreigners are admitted to vote at our elections, and the loss of a proper independence of judgment and action in our own people, and a consequent susceptibility of being sway-

And by the Want of a Proper Independence in our own People.

ed to their own hurt by artful, selfish, and unprincipled party leaders.

Let me here guard against misapprehension and misconstruction. We have had, and still have, many naturalized citizens, whose talents and virtues are an ornament to our country ; men of enlightened views and ardent patriotism ; men sound to the core in their political and moral principles, and forward in every patriotic enterprise ; men, in short, whose public services are a part of our national glory, and who are justly regarded as among the pillars of the state. It is not of such that I speak. I refer to that overflowing tide of immigration which disgorges upon our shores its annual thousands and tens of thousands of Europe's most degraded population ; men without knowledge, without virtue, without patriotism, and with nothing to lose in the issue of any election. Are these persons fit depositaries of political power ? Have they any of that attachment to our institutions, and that knowledge of our form of government, which are essential to its safe exercise ? Surely, either the honesty or the intelligence of the man who could maintain such a position, might well be questioned. There is danger, there must be danger, impending over us from this source, as well as from the other.

Now what is the remedy for each ? The pro-

Education the only remedy. Universal suffrage—a blessing or a curse.

per remedy against the first mentioned of these dangers, would be a change in our naturalization laws; but such a change can scarcely be anticipated. The only practicable antidote to this, the only effectual safe-guard against the other, the only sure palladium of our liberties, is in so thorough an education of all our own citizens as shall nullify foreign influence, so far as it is dangerous, and secure real personal independence in the natives of the soil. Our very freedom will prove our bane, unless the people, the original source of all power, are so far enlightened as to be able to exercise the various functions of power aright. Universal suffrage, like many other things in this contradictory world, is either a blessing or a curse, according to circumstances. It is a blessing to a nation whose citizens use it with intelligence; it would be a curse to any people so far wanting in that attribute as to allow themselves to be made mere tools in the hands of ambitious demagogues. It is possible that a nation may be well governed, where the body of the people are ignorant; but it must be a government in which the people have no voice. Russia is governed with ability, but what imagination can paint the horrid scenes that would ensue upon the sudden introduction there of the right of universal suffrage? Freedom under such circumstances would be the

Intelligence and Virtue our only Safeguard.

most terrible of curses. It would become an instrument of destruction, to be dreaded in proportion to the degree in which it was possessed. No, the ability to reflect, examine, and judge, and the possession of elevated virtue, each attainable for the most part only through the instrumentality of education, are essential to the safe enjoyment and useful exercise of the privileges of freemen. It is a truth which we all acknowledge, but which we do not lay to heart as we ought, that intelligence and virtue are the bulwarks of a free government, that education is the parent of all true personal independence, and that in proportion to our intellectual and moral illumination will be our chances of surviving, in the vigour of perpetual manhood, the operation of those causes which have undermined all preceding republics, and which are already at work for our ruin. And let it not be forgotten that the importance of education is increasing every year in proportion to the vast influx of foreign voters, the increase of our native population, and the expansion of our people over a wider territory.

The strength and permanency even of the Celestial Empire, strange as it may seem, depend upon her literary institutions and her various educational establishments. Behold the testimony of a recent intelligent traveller on this point.

The Chinese Empire dependent on her Literary Institutions for Strength.

“The *Literary Institutions* of China,” says Mr. Roberts, in his embassy to the Eastern Courts of Cochin China, Siam, and Muscat, “are the pillars that give stability to the government. Her military forces are utterly inadequate to hold together the numerous extensive provinces and territories, that constitute the wide dominions of the reigning dynasty. With great difficulty the Tartar troops overrun the country; conquering province after province, and gradually extending their authority over the territories on the west of China Proper. But for a long period both the discipline and the energies of the Chinese soldiery have been on the wane: and at this moment the imperial hosts present nothing formidable but their numerical amount; the recent insurrections at Leen-chow and Formosa, have afforded the most complete evidence of this imbecility. Not only in this part of the empire, but along the whole coast up to the great wall on the north, and even beyond that in Mantchou Tartary, both the land and naval forces have become so exceedingly enervated and dissolute, that they exercise no salutary influence or control, except over a few, who are equally debased with themselves. As police-men, in the capacity of lictors, thief-takers, and executioners, they are not less detested than feared by the common people; they are in fact, for all purposes of

Learning indispensable to those who aspire to Places of Authority.

defence, little better than *dead men*; were they stricken from the catalogue of the living, we can scarcely doubt that the stability of the empire would remain unimpaired.

“ There are many who look with astonishment at the magnitude of this empire, and believe it strong and immovable as the everlasting hills. But an examination of its history and present organization, would show them that it has been frequently rent and broken by rebel chieftains, ambitious statesmen, and haughty kings; and that its present greatness is chiefly attributable to its peculiar literary institutions. These, though they are the glory and strength of the nation, are, except for mere purposes of government, amazingly deficient; and it is their relative, rather than intrinsic value, that renders them worthy of special notice. Wealth and patronage have great influence here; they often control the acts of government, stay the course of justice, cover the guilty, and confer honours and emoluments on the undeserving. But as a general rule, *learning*, while it is an indispensable prerequisite for all those who aspire to places of trust and authority in the state, is sure to command respect, influence, and distinction.

“ Thus, without the dreadful alternative of overthrowing the powers that be, a way is opened to

The most distinguished Statesmen rise to Eminence by Intellectual Effort.

ambitious youth, by which he may reach the highest station in the empire; the throne only excepted. Usually the most distinguished statesmen are those who have risen to eminence by intellectual efforts: they are at once the philosophers, the teachers, and rulers of the land. These distinctions they cannot however maintain, without yielding implicit obedience to the will of the monarch, which is most absolute and uncontrolled. Let them honour and obey the power that is over them, and they stand; dependant indeed on the one hand, but on the other, in proud and envied distinction.

“ High rank in the state is the brightest glory to which this people aspire; with them, learning derives its chief value from the simple fact, that it brings them within the reach of that dazzling prize. Strict examinations, regulated by a fixed code of laws, have been instituted and designed solely to elicit from the body of the community the “*true talent*” of the people, with the ulterior intention of applying it to purposes of government. At these examinations, which are open to all except menial servants, lictors, players, and priests, it is determined who shall rise to distinction and shed glory on their ancestors and posterity—who shall live on in obscurity and die and be forgotten. The competitors of the Olympic games never en-

Lord Bacon's celebrated Aphorism forcibly illustrated.

tered the arena before the assembled thousands of their countrymen, with deeper emotion than that which agitates the bosoms of those who contest the palm of these literary combats. The days on which they are held, and their results published in Canton, are the proudest which its inhabitants ever witness."

How true is the celebrated aphorism of Lord Bacon, that "knowledge is power!" It has been so in all ages and in every clime. It is a mighty instrument either for good or for evil. What a noble incentive this to labour for its acquisition! and how fearful the responsibility which the possession of it involves!

The Chinese government, the purest form of despotism on earth, the slow growth of uncounted ages, is upheld, and its vigour perpetuated, by EDUCATION. How forcible the argument thence derivable in favour of this exalted and exalting quality! And if it has force as applicable to such a country as China, it applies, as the logicians say, *a fortiori*, to civil institutions based, as ours are, on the principles of freedom and equality, and depending, confessedly, on the intelligence and virtue of the people for their security and vigour.

Now to sum up. It has been shown, I would fain trust conclusively, that the prevalence of good

Summing up of the Argument. Necessity of Popular Education.

and thorough systems of popular education in the several members of our confederacy, would exalt the character of our citizens, and greatly augment their happiness in their civil, domestic, and individual relations; that every new degree of excellence in our primary schools, and every successive approach towards perfection in the system of education and universality in the enjoyment of its benefits, would add millions to the wealth of the nation where it abstracted only thousands; and that such education is inseparably connected with the right discharge of our duties as freemen, with the perpetuity of our glorious constitution, and with the progress of liberal principles and free institutions throughout the world.

These considerations must establish, if any thing can, the great, the paramount, the overshadowing importance, nay, the absolute necessity, of general education in a country like ours, and consequently the duty of the states to make adequate provision for it, and then to watch that the means adopted for that purpose be faithfully employed. For, it would be a position scarcely worthy of serious refutation, it would be in contradiction to all the lights of experience and observation, it would be little better than trifling, to contend that education can become universal and thorough, in a country where the government manifests no solici-

Duty of Government in this Matter. Bulwer's opinion.

tude in its behalf, and puts forth no exertions to promote it.*

* Mr. Bulwer, in his work on England and the English, argues forcibly in support of this position. He says:—"Never was this truth more clearly displayed than in the state of our popular education. Behold our numberless charities sown through the land. Where is their fruit? What better meant, or what more abused? In no country has the education of the poor been more largely endowed by individuals—it fails—and why?—BECAUSE IN NO COUNTRY HAS IT BEEN LESS REGARDED BY THE GOVERNMENT."

CHAPTER II.

BRANCHES OF STUDY PROPER FOR COMMON SCHOOLS.

Preliminary Inquiry into the Nature and Object of Education—This Term, in its broadest sense, comprehends all the Influences which act upon Man—These Influences ranged by Foster under five Heads—A Sixth added—Education produces two classes of Effects—Important in both Aspects, and why—Object of Education—Complex Nature of Man must be considered—His Relations must be understood—These Relations pointed out—His Destination—His Relations and Destination indicate the Education suited to his Nature—Education should be such as to develope our Powers, communicate useful Knowledge, and form the Disposition and the Habit of Virtue—A System of Popular Education should prescribe a Course of Study—Text-Books prescribed by Law in Saxe Weimar—Analytical Description of them—Course of Study enjoined by Law upon the Primary Schools of Prussia—The Prussian system decried in an Article in the first Number of the Democratic Review—Sophistry of the Argument, and Illiberality of the Attack—Our Common Schools compared with those of Saxe Weimar and Prussia—Their Inferiority—Limited Course of Studies—Superficial Nature of the Instructions given—Indifference of Parents—A Fundamental Reform necessary—List of Studies should be extended—Instruction should be made more thorough—Enumeration of Branches proper to be introduced into Common Schools—Objection to the Course recommended “that it would consume too much time,” answer-

Education comprehends every Influence that modifies Character.

ed—The Author's Views confirmed by the Course of Study recommended by Dick—Necessity of Moral and Religious Instruction insisted upon more at large—Religious Education the Foundation of all good Character—Essential to the full Advantage of Intellectual Education—Objection to the Introduction of Religious Instruction into Popular Schools—Not founded in Reason—Government owes Christianity a heavy Debt, and is bound, as far as possible, to discharge it—The awakening of Sectarian Jealousies apprehended—Method by which these are allayed in Prussia—Can it not be done in this Country?—Weight of Authority in favour of Religious Instruction in Schools—Opinions of Simpson, Bulwer, Cousin, and Dick, on this Question—The objection to Universal Education, “that it would raise the Labouring Classes above their Sphere,” considered and answered—Objection to the Plan recommended founded on the Principle “that each Parent ought to educate his own Children”—This Objection based on Selfishness—A just Comprehension of the Selfish Principle itself refutes it.

HAVING established this point, let us, in the next place, inquire what branches of study it would be proper and desirable to introduce into a system of common school instruction. Preliminary to this, however, a brief inquiry into the nature and object of education may not be out of place.

What, then, is education? And what the main object it ought to aim to accomplish?

Education, in its broadest meaning, comprehends all those influences, of whatever kind, and in whatsoever manner exerted, which go to form

These Influences classified. Education produces two Classes of Effects.

or to modify human character. Foster has ranged these influences under five divisions, which include at least the most important of them :—viz. direct instruction, reading, companionship, the scenes of nature, and the state of society. He might perhaps have added, as the source of a distinct class of influences, though in some sense included in his classification, parental authority, and those powerful home associations, which exert an enduring effect on the characters of most men, which occasionally stay the uplifted hand of the hardened sinner, and prevent the accomplishment of some deed of meditated villany, and which sometimes even restore to the bosom of domestic love, and to the hope of a life to come, the wandering prodigal, who had wasted his substance in riotous living, or been driven from society for his flagitious practices.

In this sense the whole of life is but a long course of education ; and the church edifice, the hall of legislation, the popular assembly, the theatre, the race-course, the bar-room, the very streets of our cities, are as really places of education, as the school-room or the college.

This complex training produces two classes of effects : it develops the physical, moral, and intellectual powers of man ; and it forms and matures his habits. Viewed in either aspect, it is im-

Impossible to overrate its Importance. Why.

possible to overrate its importance. But why impossible? If man were like the brute that obeys his superior intelligence, born to consume the fruits of the earth, to flutter through his brief hour of life, and then to disappear entirely from the scene of existence, to undergo a complete absorption, an utter annihilation of his powers of enjoyment and of suffering, sarcasm might exhaust its powers of ridicule without doing justice to the folly of toiling for that which we call education. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," would then be a maxim embodying the very quintessence of wisdom; an aphorism worthy of a Socrates, or a Seneca. No; it is the nature and the relations of man, his immortality, and his accountability alone, which render his education an affair of the smallest moment, and these make it a thing not merely of considerable, but of incalculable magnitude. Eternity, to borrow in part an idea of Robert Hall's, invests every thing in any way connected with it, with a mysterious and awful importance, entirely its own, and is the only property in the creation which gives that weight and moment to whatever it attaches, compared with which all interests which know a period, fade into the most contemptible insignificance.

These remarks lead us naturally to the second branch of our present inquiry, viz. the object of

Object of Education. Complex Nature of Man considered.

education. In considering the subject in this relation, it is evident that we must exclude from our thoughts, or at least embrace only incidentally, all those classes of influences enumerated above, except one,—that is, those arising from direct instruction.

Man is a being extremely complex in the structure of his mind and body, and having numerous relations both to other beings of the same species, and to different orders of the creation. Considered in the former of these respects, he possesses various powers, susceptible of a high degree of enlargement and cultivation, but liable at the same time to numberless disorders, to temporary suspensions of their activity, to positive perversion of their uses, and some of them to final extinction. Considered in the latter respect, he is bound by a variety of obligations, corresponding to, or rather arising from, the relations in which he stands to other beings. Considered in both respects—in reference to his whole being—he has duties of high significance to perform; a destiny of momentous import to fulfil; a race to run, in which immortality is the prize. The legitimate object of education, and the real one, when it is not misdirected by folly, or perverted by wickedness to frivolous or sinister ends, is to place man in a condition in which he may most fully answer these high pur-

Education fits Man to answer the ends of his Creation.

poses of his creation; where he may most readily fall in with, and most effectually help forward, the Divine intention concerning him.

Now, in order to accomplish this, three conditions are necessary;—his powers must be developed, his mind stored with knowledge, and his habits formed to industry and virtue. This is obvious; but it does not yet appear what exactly ought to be the character of the developement, the knowledge, and the habits referred to. In order to determine this question, his powers, his relations, and his destination must be understood. The first mentioned of these properties belong to the department of the physiologist and the metaphysician, the second to that of the moral philosopher, and the third to that of the minister of religion; but all fall fairly within the province of the educationist. The first, however, we shall pass by as not particularly pertinent to our present aim. Let us briefly inquire into the two latter.

What are the most important of those relations which man, as a rational and moral creature, sustains to other beings? First in the order of time, and most momentous in their consequences, are those in which he stands to the Creator, as his offspring, his beneficiary, his revolted subject, and that new relation of gracious fellowship and sonship created by the stupendous phenomenon of

Man's Relations explained. His Immortal Destination.

mediatorial and redeeming love. Next come his complex and multiplied relations to his fellow man, embracing those which he bears to the great brotherhood of humanity, the country to which he owes allegiance, the neighbourhood which is the sphere of his more immediate influence, and the domestic circle of which he forms a part, either as head or member; each class of relations involving a distinct class of obligations, and the whole comprehending a range of duties, differing indeed in importance, but none of them unimportant, and, in the aggregate, demanding unwearied diligence and the utmost exertion of his powers. Then follow his relations to the inferior orders of animated existence, and to the powers and productions of inanimate nature. These do not perhaps impose any positive duties upon him, except that of treating with humanity all that has life; but—and this is a consideration of far greater consequence—they are capable, if rightly understood, of rendering him most essential aid in the performance of his other duties.

What is the destination of man? It is needless to waste words in replying to this question. True, the immortality of the soul may be demonstrated by the naked powers of reason, and even the doctrine of a future retribution strongly inferred from facts and principles within our reach, apart from

Developement of his Powers. Attainment of Knowledge. Habits.

any communication from Heaven. But Divine Revelation has saved us the necessity of doing this. On its every page IMMORTALITY AND JUDGMENT TO COME stand out in letters of light. It teaches us further that this world is a place of trial and training for the next, and that our characters here will determine our destiny there.

Are not these views pertinent to our present inquiry? Do they not throw light upon the point under consideration? Do they not, in fact, clearly point out and define the object which education ought to propose to accomplish?—viz. such a developement of our powers, animal and rational, the attainment of such and so much knowledge, and the formation of such habits, as far as circumstances will permit, as will fit us to discharge most successfully and usefully the various duties which our relations impose upon us. In other words, and more specifically, the object of education is, or should be, to make man reflective, moral, prudent, healthy, industrious, skilful in business, independent in feeling, and truly religious.

A state has not done all its duty in regard to education, when it has established schools and made provision for their support; nor even when it has provided good teachers and established an organization that ensures a faithful discharge of duty in the various functionaries employed. No

Course of Study should be prescribed. First Class-book in Saxe Weimar.

system of popular education can be considered as at all perfect, which does not prescribe, I do not say, the particular books to be used, or the specific methods of instruction, but at least some general outline of the course of study to be pursued—the branches of knowledge to be communicated. This is done in those European states, where the instruction of the people is made an affair of government. In the Grand Duchy of Saxe Weimar, even the class-books are prescribed, the same being used in all the primary schools throughout the realm. Permit me to call your attention to these books. They are four in number, and of the following purport :—

The first class-book is destined for the youngest children ; it contains, in regular gradations, the composition of syllables, punctuation, elementary formation of language, simple stories, sentences or proverbs of one verse or upwards, diverse selections, sketches, &c. “The sentences,” says Mr. Cousin, “struck me particularly ; they contain, in the most agreeable shapes, the most valuable lessons, which the author classes under systematic titles, such as, our duties to ourselves, our duties to men, our duties to God, and the knowledge of his divine attributes,—so that, in the germ of literature, the infant receives also the germ of morals and of religion.”

The Second and Third Class-Books in Saxe Weimar.

The second book, for the use of children from eight to ten, is not composed merely of amusing sketches,—the author touches upon matters of general utility. He proceeds on the just idea that the knowledge of the faculties of the soul ought a little to precede the more profound explanations of religion: under the head of dialogue between a father and his children, the book treats, first, of man and his physical qualities; secondly, of the nature of the soul and of its faculties, with some notions of our powers of progressive improvement and our heritage of immortality; and, thirdly, it contains the earliest and simplest elements of natural history, botany, mineralogy, &c.

The third work contains two parts, each divided into two chapters. The first part is an examination of man as a rational animal,—it involves these questions: What am I? What am I able to do? What ought I to do? It teaches the distinction between men and brutes, instinct and reason; it endeavours to render the great moral foundations of truth clear and simple, by familiar images and the most intelligible terms.

As the first chapter of this portion exercises the more reflective faculties, so the second does not neglect the more acute, and comprises songs, enigmas, fables, aphorisms, &c.

The second part of the third work contains,

The Fourth. Elementary Schools of Prussia.

first, the elements of natural history, in all its subdivisions, notions of geography, of the natural rights of man, of his civil rights ; with some lessons of general history. An appendix comprises the geography and especial history of Saxe Weimar.

The fourth book, not adapted solely for Saxe Weimar, is in great request throughout all Germany. It addresses itself to the more advanced pupils. It resembles, a little, the work last described, but is more extensive on some points. It is equally various, but it treats in especial more minutely on the rights and duties of subjects; it proceeds to conduct the boy, already made rational as a being, to his duties as a citizen.

Such are the four class-books in the popular schools of Saxe Weimar. Such is the foundation of that united, intellectual, and lofty spirit which marks the subjects of that principality.*

In Prussia, a country which exhibits the extraordinary spectacle of a despotic government and the most paternal anxiety, as well as the wisest plan, for the education of all the people, the popular schools are divided into two classes,—termed elementary schools, and burgher schools. The

* See Bulwer's *England and the English*, Book II., Chap. 3.

Course of Study traced out and enjoined by Law.

text-books in these schools are not prescribed, but the course of study is traced out and enjoined by law.

The law thus summarily sets forth the object of the national education, and the branches of knowledge it must include:—"To develope the faculties of the soul, the reason, the senses, and the physical frame. It shall embrace religion and morals, the knowledge of size and numbers, of nature and of man, the exercises of the body, vocal music, drawing, and writing." It then goes on in detail as follows:—

Every elementary school includes necessarily the following objects:

Religious instruction for the formation of morality, according to the positive truths of Christianity.

The language of the country.

The elements of geometry and the general principles of drawing.

Practical arithmetic.

The elements of physical philosophy, of geography, of general history; but especially the history of the pupil's own country. These branches of knowledge to be taught and retaught as often as possible, by the opportunities afforded in learning to read and write, independently of the particular and special lessons given upon those subjects.

Burgher Schools. Studies pursued in them.

The art of song—to develope the voice of children, to elevate their minds, and to improve and ennable both popular and sacred melodies.

Writing and the gymnastic exercises, which fortify all our senses, especially that of sight.

The more simple of the manual arts, and some instructions upon manual labour.

In the burgher schools, are taught, conformably to the provisions of the law, the following branches:

Religion and morals.

The national tongue; reading, composition, exercises of style and of the invention; the study of the national classics.

Latin is taught to all children, under certain limitations, in order to exercise their understandings; even whether or not they are destined to advance to the higher schools, or to proceed, at once, to their professions or trades.

The elements of mathematics, and an accurate and searching study of practical arithmetic.

Physical philosophy, so far as the more important phenomena of nature are concerned.

Geography and history combined, so as to give the pupil a knowledge of the divisions of the earth, and of the history of the world. Prussia, its history, laws, and constitution, shall be the object of especial study.

This Education given by Prussia to all her Children.

The principles of drawing, at all occasions.

Writing, singing, and gymnastic exercises.

“Such,” says the author of *England and the English*, “is the programme of the education of elementary schools in Prussia; an education that exercises the reason, enlightens the morals, fortifies the body, and founds the disposition to labour and independence. This is the education given by Prussia to all her children. Observe, here is no theory—no programme of untried experiments: this is the actual education, actually given, and actually received. It is computed that thirteen out of fifteen children, from the age of seven to that of fourteen, are at the public schools; the remaining two are probably at the private schools, or educated at home; so that the *whole* are educated—and *thus* educated! Observe, this is no small and petty state, easily managed and controlled; it is a country that spreads over large tracts, various tribes, different languages, multi-form religions: the energy of good government has conquered all these difficulties. But what, Sir,* you will admire in the Prussian system, is not the laws of education only, but the spirit that framed and pervades the laws—the full apprecia-

* Dr. Chalmers is the gentleman here addressed.

Prussian System of Education decried in the Democratic Review.

tion of the dignity and objects of men—of the duties of citizens—of the powers, and equality, and inheritance of the human soul. And yet in that country the people are said to be less *free* than in ours!—how immeasurably more the people are *regarded!*"

There is an article in the first number of a literary journal, recently established at the City of Washington, in which the Prussian system is attacked and decried as in no respect suited to this country, because, forsooth, Prussia is a monarchy! If the writer of said article means by this that it is not adapted to our use, because it teaches the laws and constitution of Prussia, so far I agree with him; but if he means that the great principle which is recognised as the basis of the system—viz. the necessity of a thorough education of all the people—and the wisdom and liberality with which that principle is carried out in its application, are at war either with our interests or our institutions, then, gentlemen, your own good sense shall be my only argument to refute him. I forbear to characterise his sophistry in the terms which it richly merits. Some good things *can* come out of Nazareth. Let us not be guilty of the flagrant illiberality of refusing to applaud and to imitate what is intrinsically excellent, because it happens to have originated with monarchists instead of republicans,

Inferiority of our Schools. Bulwer's Account of English Schools.

and to exist on the southern coast of the Baltic instead of the western shores of the Atlantic ocean.

How poor and meager, in comparison with the education which Prussia and Saxe Weimar give to all their children, is that afforded by the generality of our common schools! Bulwer's description of the state of things in the elementary schools of England, is much more applicable to ours.—“Generally,” says he, “throughout the primary schools, nothing is taught but a little spelling, a very little reading, still less writing, the catechism, the Lord’s prayer, and an unexplained, unelucidated chapter or two in the Bible; add to these the nasal mastery of a hymn, and an undecided conquest over the rule of Addition, and you behold a very finished education of the poor.”

I would not indulge in sarcasm, or be unjust, on such a subject as this. Even were I so disposed myself (which I am not), I am sure such a course would not meet with your approbation. I am free to admit, therefore, that this would not be a fair picture of our popular schools. Nevertheless, what do these institutions actually accomplish in the way of disciplining the powers of their pupils, and imparting knowledge? It would scarcely be unfair to say that, in a large proportion of them, the faculty of observation and comparison is not developed, nor the art of reflection taught, at all. And

List of Studies pursued in our Schools. Wherein deficient.

as to the knowledge they communicate, reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, geography, and grammar, form generally the entire catalogue of studies in their courses of instruction. In reference to many of them even this list must be abridged, and in respect to still more, the branches enumerated are both imperfectly taught, and pursued to a very inconsiderable extent. The dignity of man, the powers of the human soul, the education of the senses, our rights and duties as men and citizens, and the works of the Creator by which we are surrounded, are subjects which, as you well know, are never dreamed of in the philosophy of most of our primary schoolmasters. The masters themselves are for the most part ignorant on these points, and multitudes of parents would oppose their introduction into school as branches of study. I have even heard of a father who objected to his children learning geography, on the sage ground that he did not learn it himself, and had never felt the want of it! Yet, notwithstanding all this, we are apt to think and speak of our common schools as superior to those of all other countries; and even Mr. Dick has been imposed upon by our boastings, and assigns us the first place in this respect, in his work on the Mental Illumination and Moral Improvement of Mankind. The statements made a little above, respecting the schools of

Our good Opinion of ourselves. It is a flattering Delusion.

Saxe Weimar and Prussia, must convince all, who are not steeled against conviction, that this opinion is but a flattering delusion, the offspring of an unfounded and overweening self-complacency.*

* The following view is given by Mr. Simpson of the “education of the humble classes” in England and Scotland. With some abatements, it is applicable to a large portion of the schools in this country. I give the extract, for the soundness of its doctrines, beseeching all to read and ponder it thoroughly:—“ But we come to the question, what is the *nature* of the education of the humbler classes which is extending in England, and has been so long established in Scotland? Is it of a kind to impart useful practical knowledge for resource in life—does it communicate to the pupil any light upon the important subject of his own nature and place in creation,—on the conditions of his physical welfare, and his intellectual and moral happiness;—does it, above all, make an attempt to regulate his passions, and train and exercise his moral feelings, to prevent his prejudices, suspicions, envying, self-conceit, vanity, impracticability, destructiveness, cruelty, and sensuality? Alas! No. It teaches him to READ, WRITE, and CIPHER, and leaves him to pick up all the rest as he may! It forms an instructive example of the sedative effect of established habits of thinking, that our ancestors and ourselves have so contentedly held THIS to be education, or the shadow of it, for any rank of society! Reading, writing, and ciphering, are mere instruments; when attained, as they rarely or never are, after all, by the working class to a reasonable perfection, they leave the pupil exactly in the situation where he would find himself, were we to put tools into his hands, the use of which, however, he must learn as he may. We know well that he will be much more prone to misapply his tools, and to cut himself with them, than to use them aright. So it is with his reading; for really any

Necessity of a radical Reform of our Common Schools.

There is need of a fundamental reform of our common schools with respect to the branches

writing and accounting of this class, even the most respectable of them, scarcely deserve the name, and may be here put out of the account. Reading consists in the recognition of printed characters arranged into syllables and words. With this most abstract accomplishment may coexist unregulated propensities, selfish passions, sensual appetites, filthy and intemperate habits, profound intellectual darkness and moral debasement, all adhering to a man as closely after as before he could read ; and, be it remarked, these qualities will give their bias to his future voluntary reading, and assuredly degrade and vitiate its character ; it will tend to strengthen his prejudices, deepen his superstitions, flatter his passions, and excite his animal appetites. Well is all this known to the agitator, the quack, and the corruptor. They know that the manual-labourer can read ; but they know, as well, that he is incapable of thinking, or detecting their impositions, if they only flatter his passions. No just views of life have ever been given him, no practical knowledge of his actual position in the social system. We are always told that the majority of criminals cannot *read*, as if the mere faculty of reading would have diminished the number of criminals. This is a great delusion. For the reasons I have stated, mere reading might have increased the number of criminals, it would be quite ineffective in diminishing them. But if the investigation had gone the length of ascertaining with which of the criminals had an attempt at moral training and useful knowledge ever been made, we should have found *that* column of the table a blank, and something like cause and effect would begin to dawn upon us. It is needless to pursue so obvious a matter further. If a national system of education is to stop at reading, writing, and ciphering, it would save much trouble and after disappointment not to attempt it at all."

List of Studies should be enlarged. Instruction made more thorough.

taught in them. The list of studies should include many now entirely omitted, and those already embraced in it ought to be pursued far beyond what they are at present. The right which, as American citizens, we most value, is the elective franchise; but how can this right be usefully exercised, unless those who enjoy it possess some knowledge of general history, and especially of the history and constitution of their own country? But this knowledge, if possessed at all, must, as a general thing, be acquired at school; at least the foundation of it must be laid there. But not only should all the youth of our land learn so much of the history of other times and nations, and of the history, constitution, and laws of their own country, as will enable them to exercise the right of suffrage wisely; they ought also to form some acquaintance with the manifold and wonderful works of the Creator. The elements of natural history, botany, mineralogy, chemistry, anatomy, physiology, and physical philosophy, when taught with sensible illustrations and appropriate experiments, are all perfectly level to the understanding of children, and admirably adapted to develope their faculties of observation and reason, to excite a thirst for knowledge, to form them to habits of reflection, and to awaken in their souls, ere yet the well-springs of life have been poisoned, those

Enumeration of Studies. Christian Religion indispensable.

sentiments of piety, which are the brightest ornament, as they are the sweetest consolation, of our degenerate nature. Vocal music, drawing, public and domestic economy, agriculture, and some of the manual arts, ought severally to receive their share of attention from the pupils. The girls ought to have specific instructions given them, adapted to prepare them for their peculiar duties as wives and mothers. To all this should be added some elementary knowledge of the powers and susceptibilities of their own minds, especially of their power of progressive improvement in knowledge and goodness; some instruction on the true relations of their nature, and the duties originating in them; and some general notion of the evidences on which the truth of that religion rests, around which cling their hopes of immortality. And religion itself—not the peculiar dogmas of some favourite sect—but the pure, ennobling, life-giving principle of Christianity, as set forth in the teachings and lives of Christ and his Apostles, and recorded in the New Testament, must form the body and the spirit, the centre and the circumference, the beginning, the middle, and the end of every wise system of popular education.

It would swell this volume to a size altogether beyond my intentions, to enter into a full analysis of these various branches of knowledge, a lengthen-

Objection to this view of what Popular Education ought to be answered.

ed explanation of their importance to every human being, and a laboured defence of them as applicable to the use and purposes of common schools. The author believes, however, that it would not be difficult to present such an exposition of these matters as would convince all candid men of the soundness of his opinions respecting the course of study appropriate for popular seminaries.

It may be objected to the view here given of what the education of the people ought to be, that it would require too much of the pupil's time. The objection is not without a show of reason, but it will hardly bear examination. It must be borne in mind, first, that, in order to carry these views into effect, a body of well trained and experienced teachers will be necessary, and that more can be learned in one year under a good instructor, than in three or four with a poor one; secondly, that, by the expulsion of ill-judged books of extracts, and the substitution of books prepared upon more philosophical principles, several of these branches might be taught in part incidentally, while the pupil was learning to read; and, thirdly, that it is no part of the plan to make of the labouring classes statesmen, theologians, or philosophers, but simply to lay the foundation, in sound elementary knowledge, of a superstructure afterwards to be reared, suited to the conditions of our being, in harmony

These views not visionary nor impracticable.

with the divine purpose, and worthy of the end for which we were created. Besides, Gentlemen, shall it be said that the children of freemen, to every one of whom the highest honours of his country are open, cannot devote as much time to the cultivation of their minds and to preparation for the duties of life, as the children of despotic governments? Away with such a plea! It is a foul calumny on our institutions. But I would be willing to compromise for a course of common school instruction, as comprehensive as that of Prussia or Saxe Weimar.

Some persons, whose notions of the appropriate studies of common schools are more or less affected by their present low and imperfect standard, may be surprised at the extent of the course here recommended, and may charge me with entertaining visionary and impracticable views. To such I shall appear as one that dreams, or like the child, who, with mimic industry, constructs his house of blocks for the idle pleasure of seeing it fall in pieces again. I do not fear any such feeling as this on your part, but for the satisfaction of these persons, and to show them that wiser and better men dream in the same way, I ask their attention to the branches of learning recommended by Dick, who has written much and well on education, as proper to be introduced into all popular schools;

Course of Studies recommended by Mr. Dick for Common Schools.

some of them, however, of course, only in their elementary principles. They are English reading, writing, and composition; drawing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, geology, astronomy, experimental philosophy and chemistry, mathematics, physiology, the art of reasoning, natural theology, natural history, vocal music, public and domestic economy, morality and religion.* Those who would see these studies defended at length, and their adaptation to the purposes of general education shown, are referred to the sixth and seventh chapters of the Mental Illumination and Moral Improvement of Mankind. For myself, I am firmly persuaded that, until something like the course of study I have traced out shall be generally adopted, or at least, until their senses, their reflective powers, and their moral feelings shall be *educated*, in the proper sense of the term, our hardy yeomanry, the bone and sinew of the land, will never reach that mental and moral elevation which every human being ought to obtain, and which is, in an es-

* Permit me, Gentlemen, to call your attention to a remarkable omission here, whether it is the result of accident or design. Civil history is not so much as alluded to in this enumeration. Mr. Dick could not have intended to exclude it altogether. I incline to the opinion that it is a mere oversight, though certainly a very extraordinary one.

Necessity of introducing Religious Instruction into all Schools.

pecial manner, demanded by their peculiar relations to our free civil institutions.

I have expressed the opinion, a very sincere one on my part, that no system of popular education can be deemed perfect, or adequate to the wants of a free state, which does not prescribe and render obligatory the course of studies to be pursued in the schools which it calls into being. You will have observed also that I have strenuously urged the necessity of introducing religious instruction into schools, and making the study of Christian duties a part of the prescribed course.

All experience demonstrates that the *temporal* well-being of individuals, as of nations, is by no means secured by a great intellectual developement and a refined civilization. The true honour of an individual, as of a people, depends on a severe morality, on self-control, on humility and moderation, and on the voluntary performance of all his duties towards God and towards his fellow-creatures. Religious and moral education is consequently the first want of the people. When this is deficient, all other education is often not only without real advantage, but it is in some respects even dangerous.* If, on the other hand, a good

* "The Duke of Wharton; Wilmot, Earl of Rochester; Villers, Duke of Buckingham; and Mirabeau, were in their

Religion a necessary foundation of good Character.

foundation of character has been laid in religious education, intellectual education will then be of the greatest advantage; and it ought the less to be withheld from the people, inasmuch as the Creator has given them the faculty and the disposition to acquire it, and the developement of all the powers of man puts him in possession of the means of arriving at the highest degree of perfection, and consequently of securing the greatest amount of happiness, attainable in his present state.

These views will not be contested. There is an almost perfect unanimity of opinion on the great importance, in the abstract, of cultivating the moral feelings and forming the disposition and the habits to virtue, which can be effectually done only by making the positive truths and precepts of Christianity the basis of the instructions imparted. Nevertheless, there is a real difficulty, and one of no small magnitude, in this question.

days distinguished by wit, and taste, and learning, and knowledge; and they were not less distinguished by extravagance, revelry, lawless passions, and disregard of moral and social virtue. High attainments are tremendous engines for the working out of good or evil. If not directed by correct and safe principles, they are terrible weapons of ill. The educated rogue or infidel is but the more dangerous man."—*Mr. Southard's Address before the Literary Societies of the College of New Jersey.*

Objections to religious Instruction—Church and State—Sectarianism.

Multitudes, who admit to the full the correctness of the above theory, and many of them men of personal piety, start back and stand aghast at the bare idea of making religion a necessary part of school instruction. They ring the changes on *church and state, sectarianism*, and such like cant words and phrases, till they persuade themselves and others, that there is real force in what they say. And truly there would be force in it, if the dangers which they imagine, had any foundation in fact. But I cannot help thinking that there is a morbid feeling in many minds on this subject, which causes them to magnify mole-hills into mountains, and to look at every object connected with it through a colouring medium.

Many will tell us that the religious education of children is a matter which ought to be left entirely to parents and to the clerical profession. Do they reflect that, in that case, there are numbers who would receive no instruction at all, or next to none, on the most momentous concern that can engage their attention? Do they know that there actually are thousands in this deplorable condition? The ignorance of religious truth that prevails in this country is amazing. I have myself seen and conversed with adults, in the bosom of a Christian community, who knew little more than heathen of the simplest doctrines of the Christian religion.

Government benefited by Christianity—Ought to repay the Debt.

But, they urge, it is at least an affair with which Government has nothing to do. If by this be meant only that Government has no right to dictate the religious opinions of the community, then we have no controversy; but if it be meant to assert that Government has no right to require that the great principles of moral duty, principles which in fact lie at the foundation of civil liberty, shall be taught to the children of the state, then I dissent *in toto* from the opinion. What is Government that she thus frees herself from obligation? Has she received nothing herself? Has she not on her part been incalculably benefited by Christianity? Has not her authority been thereby enforced, her sanctions confirmed, her title to respect vindicated, her principles purified, and her powers of blessing enlarged? And is she now to turn round upon Christianity, and say to her,—I can do nothing in return for all this to promote *your* interests? Is this to be the measure of her gratitude? Away with such frigid notions! For myself, I firmly believe, and I do not hesitate to avow it, that the time will come when Christian Governments will not only think it expedient to stretch their power to the limit here supposed, but will, as *Governments*, embark in the glorious work of spreading the blessings of knowledge and religion over the world; when kings shall LITERALLY become nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers

Much important ground common to all Evangelical Sects.

to the church. Is this enthusiasm? Then I glory in it. I would rather be an enthusiast on such a theme, and in such a cause, than to have the reputation of being the most prudent, calculating man that breathes.

The chief apprehension on this subject, unless I err in my opinion, is that sectarian prejudices will be excited, and an undue influence exerted in favour of the sect to which the master might happen to belong. In one word, proselytism is the bugbear. But is there not much and most important ground common to all evangelical denominations of Christians? Do they not all receive and insist upon the great essential principles of religion, such as the divine authority and truth of the Holy Scriptures, the being and perfections of God, his moral government of the world, the immortality of the soul, the fall and redemption of man, his accountability, the obligations of a pure morality, and the doctrine of a future judgment, and of endless rewards and punishments? And cannot these truths so sublime in themselves, so well fitted to expand and exalt the mind, and of infinite moment to every human being, be taught, to the entire exclusion, if need be, of everything of a sectarian character? Surely, it would be better to omit, by common consent, all reference to particular creeds and dogmas, than to thrust out entirely from a course

Method adopted by Prussia to allay Prejudice and promote Harmony.

of popular instruction, the elucidation and inculcation of truths on every account the most important to be known.

But, Gentlemen, is it necessary to do even this? On this question I would not express a positive opinion, and yet I am inclined to think that there is wisdom enough in the country to devise some plan by which even such a necessity might be obviated. This has actually been done in some countries, and in none with more complete success than in Prussia. The inhabitants of that kingdom, as you well know, are composed of extremely heterogeneous materials, and the diversity of religious belief corresponds to their dissimilarity in other respects. Rather more than half of them are Protestants, several millions Catholics, and a very respectable proportion of the Jewish faith. Yet the Government requires that religion be taught in all the schools, but without the slightest interference with the freedom of religious opinion. Permit me to call your attention to the provisions of the Prussian law on this subject.

“The difference of religion,” says the law, “is not to be an obstacle in the formation of a school society [district]; but in forming such a society you must have regard to the numerical proportion of the inhabitants of each faith; and, as far as it can possibly be done, you shall conjoin with the

Extract from the Prussian Law. Success of the Plan.

principal master professing the religion of the majority, a second master of the faith of the minority."

The law farther says:—"The difference of religion in Christian schools necessarily produces differences in religious instruction. That instruction should be always appropriate to the doctrines and spirit of the creed for which the schools shall be ordained. But as in every school of a Christian state, the dominant spirit, and the one common to all sects, is a pious and deep veneration for God; so every school may be allowed to receive children of every Christian sect. The masters shall watch with the greatest care that no constraint and no proselytism be exercised. *Private* and especial masters, of whatever sect the pupil belongs to, shall be charged with his religious education. If, indeed, there be some places where it is *impossible* for the School Committee to procure an especial instructer for every sect; *then*, parents, if they are unwilling that their children shall adopt the prevailing creed of the school, are entreated themselves to undertake the task of affording them lessons in their own persuasion."

Such is the Catholic spirit which pervades the Prussian system in respect to religious education; and such the admirable plan by which it allays sectarian prejudices, harmonizes conflicting elements, and on the most momentous of subjects,

Opinions of the Wise and Good. Mr. Simpson.

imparts instruction to all without giving offence to any. This arrangement has been found in practice to answer the end for which it was devised; it gives satisfaction to all the different sects; and it is productive of the happiest effects on the national character and manners. And that which Prussia thus wisely and, I will add, humanely performs, cannot the states of this union accomplish? To contend that they cannot, would be to acknowledge an inferiority in prudential resources, which, I, for one, am not yet prepared to grant.

What, Sirs, are the opinions of the wise and good on this point,—especially those who have devoted most time and thought to it? I do not affirm that there is entire unanimity among them, but certainly, as far as my knowledge extends, the weight of authority is decidedly in favour of the question which I am now advocating.

Mr. Simpson, an original, able, and in many respects, judicious Scotch writer, on education, speaking of the small effect produced by pulpit instructions in Great Britain, and of the want of early, thorough, and systematic religious training, as the cause of it, holds the following language:—“ What is the cause of so small a harvest from so immense a cultivation? Why does not the seed so plentifully sown fructify and produce? There is but one answer to this question, WE ARE NOT A

Bulwer recommends the Introduction of Religious Instruction in Schools.

MORALLY EDUCATED PEOPLE. There is a barrenness among us where genuine Christianity refuses to take foot; there is worse; there are the thorns of an inherent selfishness which choke it; tares preoccupy the whole field, and the husbandmen sow in vain." Again: near the end of the book from which I quote, he has these explicit words,—"No one can have read this treatise without observing that RELIGIOUS EDUCATION is strenuously advocated in it."

Bulwer, the novelist, insists, with much force of argument and vigour of language, on the indispensable necessity of religion as the foundation of a wise and efficient system of national education. His opinion is thus expressed in brief:—"Let us accomplish our great task of common instruction, not by banishing all religion, but by *procuring* for every pupil instruction in his own. And in this large and catholic harmony of toleration, I do believe the great proportion of our divines, and of our dissenters might, by a prudent government, be induced cheerfully to concur. For both are persuaded of the necessity of education, both are willing to sacrifice a few minor considerations to a common end, and, under the wide canopy of Christian faith, to secure, each to each, the maintenance of individual doctrines. I propose, then, that the *state* shall establish universal education;

Cousin's Opinion. Religion the best base of Popular Instruction.

I propose that it shall be founded on, and combined with, religious instruction; and I remove, by the suggestion I have made, the apprehension of contending sects."

Victor Cousin, the profoundest of the living philosophers of France, and one of her most accomplished statesmen, the author of the celebrated Report on Prussian Education, a man once persecuted by the priesthood,—is most decided in his opinion on this question:—“The popular schools of a nation,” he says, in the work just alluded to, “ought to be penetrated with the religious spirit of that nation. Is Christianity, or is it not, the religion of the people of France? We must allow that it is. Then, I ask, shall we respect the religion of the people, or shall we destroy it? If we undertake the destruction of Christianity, then, I own, we must take care not to teach it. But if we do not profess to ourselves that end, we must teach our children the faith which has civilised their parents, and the liberal spirit of which has prepared and sustains our great modern institutions. *Religion, in my eyes, is the best base of popular instruction.* I know a little of Europe; nowhere have I seen good schools for the people where the Christian charity was *not*. In human societies there are some things for the accomplishment of which religion is necessary. Were you

Mr. Dick. His Works full of Passages on this Subject.

to lavish the treasures of the state, to tax parish and district, still you could not dispense with Christian charity; or with that spirit of humbleness and self-restraint, of courageous resignation and modest dignity, which Christianity, well understood and *well-taught*, can alone give to the instruction of the poor. It would be necessary to call religion to our aid, were it only a matter of finance."

From the works of Mr. Dick, one of the most useful and popular writers of the present age, it would not be difficult to cull a small volume of extracts having a pointed reference to this subject, and all in full harmony with the views here advocated. One brief passage, however, is all that I can make room for: "In the preceding sketches," he remarks, "I have taken for granted, that, during the whole process of education, the attention of the young should be directed to the manifestations of the Divine attributes—the *fundamental principles of Christianity*, the rules of moral action, and the eternal world to which they are destined. These are subjects which should never be lost sight of for a single day, and which should be interwoven with every department of literary and scientific instruction. *In a particular manner it should be deeply impressed on the minds of the young, that the instructions which they receive, and the studies in which they now engage, are intended,*

Mr. Wyse. Intellectual Education without Religion, an Evil.

not merely to qualify them for the business of the present life, but likewise to prepare them for the felicities and the employments of the life to come. This is one of the ends of education which has been glaringly overlooked in most of our initiatory schools."

Mr. Wyse, a leading member of the British Parliament, in a very able work on the Necessity of a National System of Education, published last year in London, speaks thus explicitly and forcibly on this subject:—

"The education which confines to the desk or chapel is partial; it is only a chapter in the system. It is pernicious—it is a portion only of the blessing. If such be the result of separating physical and intellectual education, how much more so of dividing intellectual and moral! It is laboriously providing for the community dangers and crimes. It intrusts power, with the perfect certainty of its being abused. It brings into the very heart of our social existence the two hostile principles of Manicheism; it sets up the glory and beauty of civilisation, to be dashed to pieces by the 'evil spirit,' to whom it gives authority over it. It disciplines the bad passions of our nature against the good, making men wicked by rule—rendering vice system—intrusting to the clever head the strong hand, and setting both loose by the impulse of the bad heart

Makes Men wicked by Rule. Takes from Education its very Essence:

below. The omission of Physical Education renders the other two ineffective or precarious; but the neglect of Moral Education converts physical and intellectual into positive evils. The pestilence of a high-taught, but corrupt mind, ‘blowing where it listeth’ scathes and sears the souls of men—it is felt for miles and years almost interminable. By the press (the steam of the intellectual world) it touches distant ages and other hemispheres. It corrupts the species in mass. It is not only in the actual generation, but in the rickety offspring which follow late and long, that its deep-eating poison is strongly detected. Late ages wonder at the waste of great means, at the perversion of high opportunities, and noble powers, at the dereliction of solemn duties, which every where characterise these strong, but evil beings. Call them conquerors—call them philosophers—call them patriots—put on what golden seeming you may—when the mask falls off, as it always does, in due season, we see behind it the worst combination which can disgust or afflict humanity. Such men-deliverers and enlighteners (as their sycophants hail them)—such men are the true master-workers of the vices and calamities of their age and country. But who made them? They who taught them. Education left out its very essence. It gave them knowledge, but it left them immorality.

Dr. Barrow. Obligation of Schoolmasters to teach Religion.

“ When I speak of Moral Education, I imply religion ; and when I speak of religion, I speak of Christianity. It is morality, it is conscience, *par excellence*. Even in the most worldly sense, it could easily be shown, that no other morality so truly binds, no other education so effectually secures even the coarse and material interests of society. The economist himself would find his gain in such a system. Even if it did not exist, he should invent it. It works his most sanguine speculations of good, into far surer and more rapid conclusions, than any system he could attempt to set up in its place. No system of philosophy has better consulted the mechanism of society, or joined it together with a closer adaptation of all its parts, than Christianity.”

Dr. Barrow, for many years a distinguished teacher in London, an eminent scholar, a classical and elegant writer, a sober-minded educationist, and a man than whom none has written better on the general subject of education, says :—“ The obligation of a schoolmaster to give religious instruction to his pupils may, I think, be unanswerably proved ; whether Christianity be, what we are taught to believe it, the dictate of divine revelation ; or, what modern philosophy affects to deem it, the mere expedient of human policy.”

This obligation he then proceeds to prove, setting

Four Arguments to prove this Obligation.

forth the argument in support of it, with much ability, under four heads, viz. the influence of Christianity in checking the acknowledged vicious propensities of human nature, and the actual disorders thence resulting in society ; its necessity to the purity of the political atmosphere, and the stability of political institutions ; its connexion with personal virtue and usefulness ; and finally, its indispensable necessity to the attainment of everlasting happiness. The truth and excellency of Christianity, supported by the commands of its Author, are thus shown to constitute the obligation on the part of instructors to teach it to those entrusted to their care ; and one circumstance, which peculiarly brings home this obligation to the school-master, is, as Dr. Barrow truly remarks, that instruction on this subject, above all others, must be early begun and constantly continued. In this point, as in almost every other, man is the creature as much of custom as of conviction ; and it is generally confessed, that if sentiments of religion are not impressed upon the mind in infancy or in early youth, they will seldom be impressed with sufficient force and effect. The heart will soon be occupied with other thoughts, and the life formed to different habits ; it will not, without reluctance, receive such novel opinions, as tend to impose additional restraints upon its appetites and

Assuming the Authenticity of the Bible, the Question decided at once.

propensities. A vacant mind may, indeed, at any time, be seized with the terrors of superstition, or the reveries of enthusiasm ; but in youth only can be taught such a steady and rational system of faith, as shall form the principle of duty, and the comfort of affliction, through all the vicissitudes of life.

“ Assuming Christianity to be,” observes Dr. Barrow in the course of his *Essay on Religious Instruction*, “ what we are taught to believe it, a revelation from heaven, the question is at once and for ever decided. Nor have I supposed the possibility of its being the mere expedient of human policy, as if I thought its divine origin could rationally be doubted ; but that I might discuss the point before me on the ground most favourable to those who differ from me in opinion. To the utmost liberality of sentiment, I hope I have conceded enough ; to the modern affectation of it, certainly too much. I shall no longer, therefore, even in argument, compromise the interests of truth and the dignity of divine revelation. The doctrines of our Scriptures I shall consider as sacred and inestimable truths ; before which sophistry should be silent, and presumption abashed ; and the precepts I shall not only receive with reverence, as the laws of God ; but contend for them with zeal, as the bulwark of the happiness of man.

Addison's Opinion. Milton's Opinion.

For my own part, says Addison, I think the being of a God as so little to be doubted, that it is almost the only truth we are sure of; and to this I will venture to add, for it is little more than the fair and natural inference, that the doctrines and duties of religion are almost the only study, which we are not at liberty to cultivate or to neglect. They constitute the only science, which is equally and indispensably necessary to men of every rank, every age, and every profession. Admit the authenticity of the Bible, and the principal object of education becomes at once as obvious, as it is important; to regulate the sentiments, and form the habits of beings, degenerate, indeed, and corrupt by their own fault; but made by their Creator rational in their faculties, and responsible for their conduct. If it be the business of education to prepare us for our situation in life, and the business of life to prepare us for the happiness of eternity; then do we perceive a system of perfect order and beauty in itself; and equally consistent with what we observe in the world, and with the wisdom and goodness of its Almighty Author. Science immediately finds its proper level, and its due estimation."

The great Milton, a name that cannot be exalted by praise from any quarter at this late day, speaks, in his *Treatise on Education*, of the principles of

Hon. Samuel L. Southard's Defence of the Bible.

the young in schools "requiring a special reinforcement of constant and sound indoctrinating, to set them right and firm, instructing them more amply in the knowledge of virtue, and hatred of vice;" and also of "reducing moral instructions, derived from other sources than the Scriptures, in their nightward studies, wherewith they close the day's work, under the determinate sentence of David or Solomon, or the evangelists and apostolic Scriptures." And in another place he declares explicitly: "**THE END OF LEARNING IS TO REPAIR THE RUINS OF OUR FIRST PARENTS, BY REQUIRING TO KNOW GOD ARIGT, AND OUT OF THAT KNOWLEDGE TO LOVE HIM AND TO IMITATE HIM."***

* One of our own most eminent citizens, the Hon. Samuel L. Southard, in an Address recently delivered before the Literary Societies of the College of New Jersey,—an Address marked throughout by eloquence of style, profound research, and loftiness of sentiment,—holds the following language at pp. 17 and 18:—

"Observe, again, two comparatively unlettered men, laborious in their employments, and altogether without the adornments of literature. If one diligently reads the Bible, and becomes familiar with its language and expressions, and the other never opens it, you may tell the fact, by the superiority of the former, in his ordinary manner of conversation, even upon topics unconnected with the doctrines of the Book. The same fact is illustrated by two schools, in one of which it is sedulously taught, and in the other, is never read. You cannot converse with the scholars, without remarking the contrast."

Influence of the Bible in promoting Virtue and checking Vice.

It would be easy to multiply quotations from writers of inferior note ; but let these suffice. Here I am willing to rest both the main question, and the question of authority.

And again at pp. 32 and 33 ;—

“ A rigorous investigation of the authenticity and principles of this book, will discipline your powers—impart to you generous and lofty sentiments—high and controlling sense of duty—force of character to meet responsibilities, and firmness to encounter trials. And what affection or feeling of the heart is there, which will not find employment in the study ? Do you seek an explanation of the nature, or illustration of any pure feeling—of filial duty and affection—of conjugal or parental love—of sympathy and kindness—of strong enduring friendship—of attachment to country and her institutions—of any one emotion which is worthy of you as social and immortal beings—or of any corrupt and debasing practice which reason forbids you to indulge ? It will be found there.”

I did not feel at liberty in this connexion, to introduce the above quotations into the text, because the writer was not advocating the study of the Bible in common schools, and therefore to quote him as authority on this point would have been a manifest perversion of his language. Nevertheless, I cannot doubt, that one who has written so ably and strenuously in favour of the study of the Holy Scriptures in colleges, would be equally averse to their exclusion from the popular schools ; especially, as one of the illustrations with which he enforces his views, is taken from the influence of the Bible in schools. At all events, what is here extracted from the learned Senator’s Address, is strictly pertinent to the argument, and as such, I adopt it as my own, with due acknowledgments.

Apprehension as to the Effect of Education on Labouring Classes.

It was said in a former part of these Hints, that the only objection that *could* be urged against the most thorough national education, was its expensiveness. I recall in part that expression. It is sometimes urged, even in this country, that such an education as is here contended for, would tend to raise the labouring classes above their sphere, make them dissatisfied with their station, and give them a distaste for manual employments. This objection may be as properly considered here as anywhere.

Now in order to furnish a reasonable ground for such an apprehension, one or both, of two assumptions must be shown to be true ; either there must be some disgrace in manual labour, or it must tend to some degree of unhappiness, or both these qualities must attach to it. Let no man tell me that there is any real disgrace in labour, when I read in one of the Epistles to the Thessalonians such an injunction as the following,—“ Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, *and to work with your own hands*, as we COMMAND you ; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing ;” when I hear Paul declaring, in the same epistle, this fact,—“ For ye remember, brethren, our LABOUR and travail : *for labouring night and day*, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we

This objection considered and answered.

preached unto you the gospel of God ;” when I know that David was the feeder of his father’s flocks ; when the Scriptures every where inculcate industry as one of the first of moral duties ; and above all, when it is more than probable that our blessed Saviour himself worked for many years at the trade of a carpenter, thus teaching us that real dignity and worth do not depend on any external circumstances, but consist in the qualities of the mind and heart.

And what shall we say of the latter assumption ? Does labour tend to unhappiness ? In none, certainly, but the idle and the vicious. To the honest and industrious labouring man there cannot be a greater punishment than deprivation of employment.

Do those persons who urge this objection consider that one main design of all good education is to teach men their duty, with the reasons of it ? And who ever heard that teaching men their duty, especially if the instruction was imparted in a proper manner, was calculated to give them a disinclination to perform it ? “ The admirable mechanism of society, together with that subordination of ranks which is essential to its subsistence, is surely not an elaborate imposition, which the exercise of reason would detect and expose. The objection

Another Objection to general Education. Founded in Selfishness.

we have stated, implies a reflection on the social order, equally impolitic, invidious, and unjust."

Finally, in reply to this objection : In the schools that I would propose to establish, as you have already seen, manual and intellectual instruction should go hand in hand ; the very first lesson, and the one continually inculcated, should be a lesson of practical independence ; and the pupils should be taught and retaught, on all occasions, that nothing is really disgraceful but idleness and crime, and that the true dignity of man consists in honest labour for honourable purposes.

There is another objection made by some men against contributing any thing, in the shape of taxes or otherwise, towards the education of the mass of children in the community. It is this: viz. that *they* educate their own children themselves, and others ought to do the same by theirs. This objection is founded in selfishness, and an argument to refute it, based upon higher principles, though easily constructed, would be thrown away upon such people. Let us, therefore, meet them on their own ground, and see whether the selfish principle itself, properly understood, will not lead them to a different conclusion. The author imagines himself in the company of one of these objectors, and labouring to convince him of his error.

Imaginary Dialogue between the Author and the Objector.

AUTHOR.—Well, my friend, I am anxious that our common schools should be established upon a better basis than they are at present, and I am writing a book to that end. I maintain that all the children in the community ought to be well educated, and that the expense of their education should be defrayed by the whole community, each man paying in proportion to his property.

OBJECTOR.—My dear sir, that would be neither more nor less than this,—that the rich should educate the poor.

AUT.—Exactly so.

OBJ.—Monstrous! It would be rank injustice. Can you have the face to promulgate such a doctrine in a free country? It smells of despotism; it has no communion with the spirit of true republicanism. No, no, let every man educate his own children, in his own way; that's my doctrine, and it's my practice too. I employ a man in my own house to teach my children; I pay him punctually every quarter; and when that's done, my conscience is quite easy: I feel that I have done my part towards the education of society.

AUT.—This is truly an easy way of performing duty, and of having a quiet conscience; but I yield the point of duty, and acknowledge, for the time being, the soundness of your positions. But, my friend, do you love your own children?

Dialogue continued.

OBJ.—That's a strange question, truly. Do you take me for a monster?

AUT.—No, I do not; I know too well the tenderness and strength of your parental feelings. You say you have your children instructed at home. You can't seclude them entirely from the company of other children?

OBJ.—No; and it grieves me to the heart. They learn so much that is bad from them.

AUT.—How much would you give to have these influences purified, so that they should cease to be injurious, or at least become far less so than they are at present?

OBJ.—How much? No price would be too great. I would willingly pay a hundred dollars a year to secure so great an advantage for my children.

AUT.—In admitting so much, you yield the whole argument. If you, and such as you, would contribute but a modicum of the sum you have named, such schools might be universally established as would purify the moral atmosphere of society, and free the influences to which your children are subjected from a great portion of their present contaminating virus. Besides, are you quite sure there would not be true economy in this? Perhaps the course here recommended would so far raise the common school above its

Selfishness itself would lead to Liberality in this Matter.

present level, in point of intellectual advantage and moral influence, that you would be willing to entrust to it the education of your own children. In that case there would be a positive pecuniary gain to yourself in your contributions for the good of others.

This, I am persuaded, is sound reasoning, though it appeals to the selfish principle, and depends upon it for all its force. It is the best argument for those to whom it is addressed, though one of a more elevated character would satisfy the philosopher and the statesman.

CHAPTER III.

QUALIFICATION OF TEACHERS.

Importance of this point—Our present Deficiency in well qualified Instructors—Classes of Men who chiefly engage in this business—Motives which actuate them—Their ignorance—Inadequate Views of Parents—Anecdotes illustrative of this—A Teacher in the Ban de la Roche—Empirical Methods of Instruction—Inefficiency in Government—Its Cause—School-Teaching for the most part a Temporary Business—Some Exceptions to the above Remarks—Bad effects of the present State of Things on Teachers and Pupils—Our general Intelligence as a Nation admitted—Not attributable to our Popular Schools—Its true Causes pointed out—Glorious Results might be looked for from the Union of these Causes and a well organized System of Popular Education—Conditions of such a System—Provision for the Education of Teachers a most important Condition—Practical Error of Parents in this Matter—Deplorable Effect of it—Teaching must be made a Profession, and become respectable—No office more truly honourable than that of an Instructor—Its present degradation—Must be raised to its proper Rank—This can be effected only by the Establishment of Teacher's Seminaries—Institutions of this Kind the intellectual Want of the Age—Prussia already supplied with them—Reference to some other Countries—Origin and History of these Institutions—Their great Importance—They are the Life-Blood of an efficient System of Popular Education—Their Necessity insisted on by all Writers on both sides of the Atlantic—Extract from the Edinburgh Review on this Subject—The question examined whether these Seminaries should be connected with other Institutions, or exist under a separate Organization—Three Reasons for preferring the latter Plan—Its effect would be better, first, on the

Who are our Teachers? Motives for engaging in Teaching.

character of the Teacher; secondly, on their Respectability; thirdly, on their Education—General Principles of Organization—Two leading Results to be aimed at—good Teachers and some security that they will exercise their Profession in the State where educated—Details more difficult—The lights of Experience wanting among us—Must look to Prussia for Model Schools—Conduct of Men in Parallel Cases in the ordinary Business of Life—Propriety and Utility of sending Agents to examine and report upon the Prussian Schools.

THE qualification of teachers is a point which requires careful consideration in the organization of any general system of popular education. In this respect our schools generally will, I fear, be found to be even more deficient than in regard to their course of studies.

Who and what are our teachers at present? It is with pain and sorrow that I speak disparagingly of any class of my fellow citizens, especially that with which my own relations are nearest, and my sympathies most lively; but the paramount claims of truth and society must be permitted to outweigh all personal considerations.

What motives are now most influential in prompting men to follow the business of common school-teaching? Some engage in this employment during the winter months because they can make higher wages by it than by farming or mechanical labour; some follow the profession of teaching

Their great Ignorance. Anecdote illustrating it.

because they are too feeble to endure the more hardy and often more coveted toils of active outdoor employment; others again, because they have failed of success in all other pursuits; others for the more honourable purpose of aiding themselves in obtaining a liberal education; and the multitude, at least in some states, are made up of thriftless adventurers of every grade, too lazy to work, too poor to live without it, and much more fit to be peddling wooden nutmegs, or making hickory hams, than to undertake the task of training the youth of a nation to the knowledge and love of their duties as citizens and men.

Few of these persons possess any thing in the shape of literary attainments beyond the bald and meagre knowledge which they teach, and the many are much more fit to go to school than to undertake the labour of teaching others. Parents themselves, it is much to be feared, entertain generally very inadequate notions of the importance of having well qualified teachers for their children, and often select them from very unworthy motives,—such as relationship, friendship, cheapness, and sometimes even because they can make themselves useful in other things than their appropriate business. I have heard, gentlemen, of a district in our own state, where the loss of a teacher was bitterly deplored for—what think you? Because

Examination of a Teacher in Connecticut. Amusing Answer.

their children would lose his valuable services? No such thing; but because he was the best judge of horses, and the best horse doctor in the district! I saw, a few years ago, in the Christian Observer of Connecticut, an account, deemed authentic by the Editor,* of an examination of a teacher by a school committee in one of the districts of that state. One of the questions put to the candidate for employment, was, "Where is the District of Columbia?" His first reply was, "In Vermont." He was given to understand that that was not exactly its locality. He then shifted it to other quarters, and, after having made it perambulate various parts of the Union, the examiners and the examinee settled down in the learned conclusion that the District of Columbia was partly in Virginia and partly in Delaware. And there ended "the strife of tongues;" except as it may have been displayed in the intercourse of the master with his pupils, as it is almost needless to add, the applicant passed the ordeal successfully, and was admitted to employment.

Mr. Taylor, in his District school, declares that it

* The Rev. H. Hooker, a gentleman not likely to believe anything on insufficient grounds. The Observer declares that in some townships in that state, there is not a man, except the minister, competent to examine a teacher.

A Teacher in the Ban de la Roche. Empirical Methods of Instruction.

is no uncommon thing for the examining committees in New York to allow applicants to pass, because they happen to be third or fourth cousins to some one of their own honourable body.

Such facts as these remind one strongly of what is related of one of the schoolmasters in the Ban de la Roche, when Mr. Stouber first went there. He had been employed in that capacity for the excellent reason that he had become too old and infirm to take care of the pigs. Being thus enfeebled and incapacitated, he had been appointed, as to a business next in importance, to take care of the children. On being interrogated as to what he taught them, he replied, with perfect *naïveté*, "Nothing." And to the question why he taught them nothing, he answered, with equal simplicity, "Because I know nothing myself."

But not only is the stock of knowledge of our common school-masters extremely limited; they labour under the further disadvantage of being ignorant of the best modes of imparting to their pupils even the modicum they possess themselves. I was recently informed by the Superintendent of Common Schools in Pennsylvania,* that a teacher

* Mr. Burrows, one of the most able, judicious, and useful friends of popular education in the country.

A Schoolmaster in Pennsylvania. His Objection to Classification.

in that state told him that he had heard much of the advantages of classification in schools, but that, having tried it himself, he had found it was all folly, and that he was now satisfied that the only useful method of instruction was to hear the pupils recite their exercises one by one. Would you know the cause of so signal a failure of one of the simplest methods of economizing the labour of a teacher, and multiplying the benefits of instruction? Behold this gentleman's plan of operations! He divided his scholars off into classes, gave each an invariable position in the class, always commenced the recitation at the same end, and required as nearly as possible an equal proportion of the lesson to be recited by each member. Now, sirs, I ask you whether it requires the gift of second sight to perceive what this master's objection to classing his pupils was? Each, for the most part, learned only the portion that he supposed would come to him in the recitation. The objection, therefore, was, that classification had a bad effect on both the morals and the knowledge of the pupils, tempting them at the same time to use deceit and to neglect their studies. And this is but a specimen of the thousand and one errors in the modes of instruction, assuming as many different shapes and hues, which have arisen out of the ignorance and inexperience of teachers;—errors, which have de-

Defective Government. Ignorance of Human Nature.

graded the profession of teaching and perverted its ends, which have tortured and dwarfed the intellects of learners, and contributed more perhaps than any other cause to that wide-spread indifference which is now the principle obstacle in the way of the adoption of improved systems of general education.

What shall we say of the ability and success of our common school instructors in that important branch of their duties, comprehended in the term GOVERNMENT? Alas! it would be easy to sketch here such a picture of passion, menace, and brute force on the one side, of rudeness, insubordination, and open resistance on the other, and of coarse and angry altercation on both, as would pain every human heart, much more those who are capable of appreciating not only the immediate effects of such a state of things on the happiness of the parties, but all those remote influences it cannot fail to exert on the character and conduct of those young beings, who are, and are to be, the greatest sufferers. How should it be otherwise? In order to the maintenance of rational government in a school, in order that the influence of discipline may be beneficial instead of hurtful, it is an indispensable condition that the master be able, at least in some good degree, to control the public opinion of his pupils. This is in fact the great instrument

School-keeping a temporary Business. Exceptions to foregoing Remarks.

of good and successful school government. It is, however, an instrument beyond the power of those to use, who have no knowledge of the principles of human nature, and especially of those peculiar manifestations of it displayed in childhood. It is this almost total ignorance of human nature which, by the practical errors of which it is the source, is the principal cause of the prevalent failure in government of those who now have the management of our common schools.

The aggravated evils of the condition of things above described, are yet further increased by the circumstance, that most even of the teachers we now have, poor as they are, regard their employment as merely temporary, have an extreme disrelish for it, and only await a favourable opportunity to quit the odious task, and engage in pursuits more congenial with their inclinations.

Let me, however, act upon the principle, as consonant to reason as it is to Scripture, of “ rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s.” I would not willingly speak unjustly of any, and least of all of a class of men whose reward is so disproportionate to their toils, and who occupy a station in society with which, under existing circumstances, so much is connected that is disagreeable. I therefore most gladly admit that there are honourable exceptions to the general rule. Even now teach-

Some good Teachers. General bad Effects of the System.

ers are occasionally to be met with, who would be an honour to the profession under a system the best organized and the most comprehensive. But this does not invalidate the general fact of their want of suitable qualifications ; it still remains true that the primary schoolmasters of this country—certainly of our own state—are, as a body, unfit for the station they fill, and unworthy of being entrusted with so momentous a charge as the intellectual and moral training of a nation's youth, the bud and promise of her future strength.

That there may be, and are, some good schools under such a system, has been fully admitted ; but the evils of the system are incalculable. Inexperience, disgust, a morbid anxiety for and feverish anticipation of release from what is regarded as a loathsome and onerous thraldom, want of interest in the pupil's progress, and an entire absence of professional pride,—these are its legitimate and necessary fruits, so far as instructers are concerned. Its effects on the moral character and intellectual developement of our youth, and of course on their happiness and usefulness, cannot but be disastrous and deplorable in the extreme.

But are we not, it may be asked, in the main, an intelligent, shrewd, well-informed people ? I freely, nay, exultingly, admit that we are ; but I deny that it is to our common schools that we are

Our Intelligence as a Nation. Its Causes.

chiefly indebted for this character. As a nation, we are educated more by contact with each other, by business, by newspapers, magazines, and circulating libraries, by public meetings and conventions, by lyceums, by speeches in congress, in the state legislatures, and at political gatherings, and in various other ways, than by direct instructions imparted in the school room. And if so much general intelligence, as now unquestionably characterises us as a people, is the result of the present state of things, what might we not anticipate, if to all these influences were superadded the advantages of a well organised and comprehensive system of primary education? Results, glorious in themselves, and most auspicious to our prospects as a nation, might be looked for from such a union.

I say, A WELL ORGANIZED SYSTEM. But what are the conditions of such a system? Allow me to summon Mr. Cousin to my aid in answering this question. "The best plans of instruction," he says, "cannot be executed but by good teachers; and the state has done *nothing* for popular education, if it does not watch that those who devote themselves to teaching be well prepared; then suitably placed, encouraged, and guided in the duty of continued self-improvement; and lastly rewarded and promoted in proportion to their

Conditions of a well organised System. Philosophy of good Schools.

advancement, and punished according to their faults."

Here is the whole philosophy of good schools and sound education reduced within the compass of a nutshell. What are their elements? First, good plans of instruction; then, good teachers; next, provision by the state for preparing teachers for their work; fourthly, suitable encouragement and guidance in the duty of continued self-improvement; and finally, promotions and rewards for the meritorious, and punishments and disgraces for the unworthy. And these are all essential elements of a well organised system. Take away any one of them, and you destroy the proportions of the whole structure, and materially diminish both its strength and beauty;—take away the third—provision for the education of teachers—and you remove the corner stone of the whole system, and leave it comparatively powerless for any useful purpose. No general plan of popular education can be at all entitled to the epithet well-organised, which does not provide for the training of masters. This, in my opinion, is the first duty of a state with respect to schools; and without it, all other legislation in reference to this matter, whatever partial advantages it may result in, must stop short of the full benefits at which it ought to aim, and which it might accomplish.

Practical Error on this subject. Its fatal Effects.

There has been a radical error in the practice, if not in the opinions, of parents on this subject. They have acted as if they thought that he who was unfit for any thing else would make a very tolerable teacher for their children. No opinion could be more preposterous, no course of action more short-sighted. It is not thus that men think and act on other subjects. A mechanic must serve an apprenticeship of three, four, or five years, before he is allowed to undertake the formation of an elegant piece of furniture, or a complicated machine, when nothing can result from failure but the loss of the rude material and the workman's time. But we have been in the habit of committing the infant mind, that most delicate and complex piece of God's workmanship, to men who have never studied even the first principles of its structure; and that too at a time when its parts are most easily disarranged, and when such disarrangement produces the most fatal and lasting effects.

While such views thus practically prevail, it is in vain to look for the fruits of a wise system of elementary instruction. There is no conviction deeper or stronger in my mind than this,—that but little can be effected in this country towards elevating popular education, and establishing it on a firm basis, till we have a body of teachers

Profession of a Teacher disreputable. Must be raised to its proper Rank.

regularly trained to their business, and the occupation of an instructer shall take its proper rank among the learned professions. When the title of schoolmaster, now almost a reproach and a hissing, shall be a passport to respect, then, and not till then, will the general education become what it ought to be. And who, let me ask, is entitled to a higher degree of consideration and respect from the community than the devoted and laborious teacher of youth? Does the nature of a man's occupation confer any proportion of dignity, apart from the manner in which he performs its duties? We can scarcely deny that it does. What nobler work, then, can task the human energies than that of training immortal beings to act well their part in life, and to enjoy the rewards of virtue through interminable years? "It may be affirmed, without the least hesitation, that there is no office in general society more honourable or important than that of an instructer of the young, and none on which the present and future happiness of the human race so much depends. But in consequence of [various circumstances], the office has been rendered inefficient for the great purposes of human improvement, and the teacher himself degraded from that rank which he ought to hold in the scale of society." He must now be raised to his proper elevation in that scale, or we must be

Necessity of Teachers' Seminaries. Established in other Countries.

content to forego the advantages of a higher moral and intellectual developement of the popular mind. But the days of miracles are over; and therefore it is that I conclude that this elevation is a result which can never take place, to the extent desired and needed, till SEMINARIES FOR THE EDUCATION OF TEACHERS shall have gone into general operation.

Institutions of this kind may be regarded as emphatically the intellectual want of the age, and especially of our own country. In Prussia this is no longer a want; it is already a realization. The number of such institutions in that kingdom is now fully equal to supply the entire demand for teachers throughout its territories. France has nobly followed the lead of Prussia in this matter, and her Normal schools will ere long furnish her with a corps of instructers every way qualified for their work. Many of the German principalities, and some of the cantons of Switzerland, have achieved the same thing. Similar establishments have been founded in Greece, and in some of the South American States; particularly that formerly under the presidentship of the accomplished and liberal-minded Santander. And even in the heart of Africa, the monarch of Benin has invited a Mr. L'Espinat, a schoolmaster of Senegal, to establish in his capital a Norman school of mutual instruction.

History of these Institutions: The life-blood of Popular Education.

Nor are these institutions so recent in their inception as many probably imagine. They owe their origin to the celebrated Francke who flourished nearly a century and a half ago. Beside his Orphan Asylum at Halle, stood a seminary for the education of teachers. From this time, education and the educator became objects of general interest throughout Germany ; and since 1730, lectures on school keeping appear to have been universally delivered. Hecker, a pupil of the Frankean discipline, founded a school for teachers at Berlin in 1740 ; and one of these seminaries in Hanover was established as early as 1750. Normal schools were founded in Bohemia in 1770 ; and before the French revolution similar establishments existed in Usingen, Dessen, Cassel, Detmold, Gotha, Oeringen, and Kiel.

Thus you perceive how early the attention of other nations was directed to this great object of educating teachers, and how steadily and successfully some of them have pursued it. And who shall say that they have attached an undue importance to it? It is the very life-blood of an efficient system of popular instruction. In vain will you establish schools for the people, unless you place over them competent instructors. The wisest plan without this will be devoid of all vitality. But where will you get such teachers, unless you make

Indispensable to good Teachers. Insisted on by the ablest Writers.

them? Can you summon them from the “vasty deep” to do your bidding? You may call them, but they will not come; and for the best of reasons,—they are not in being. When will the states of this Union, the boasted land of common schools and general intelligence, awake to the importance of this subject, and put forth their energies to supply this deficiency? There is a torpor in the public mind in relation to it, for which it is not easy to account, and from the effects of which, if it be not shaken off, forebodings of the most gloomy character may well be entertained.

The institution of seminaries for the education of teachers, is no visionary scheme, no wild chimera of mine; their importance, their absolute necessity, is held by you, gentlemen, in common with all other intelligent men, who have examined enough into the matter to form a decisive opinion upon it. Are they not insisted on by some of the ablest writers and most enlightened friends of education on both sides of the Atlantic?—by Cousin in France, by Bulwer, Simpson, and Dick in England, by Bryce in Ireland, and by Woodbridge, Dwight, De Kay, and Dix in our own country? Mr. Burrowes, I understand, will urge the immediate necessity of establishing one or more in Pennsylvania, in his forthcoming Annual Report to the Legislature of that state. Their importance has

Report in favour of them by Mr. Morgan. Adopted in Philadelphia.

been repeatedly affirmed in resolutions passed at popular meetings in various parts of the country, and especially by a highly respectable meeting held in the city of Philadelphia, about a twelve-month ago, when an elaborate argument was presented in favour of their establishment in a Report drawn up by the Rev. Gilbert Morgan, and unanimously adopted. Many of the first Literary Journals of the age have earnestly and ably maintained their indispensable necessity to a high order of popular education; and among them the Edinburgh Review, the Foreign Quarterly Review, and the London Quarterly Journal of Education, the American Annals of Education, and others too numerous to mention. I ask your attention to an extract from the 117th Number of the first mentioned of these journals on the subject. The extract is of some length, but it will repay a careful perusal. At page 27, the writer says:

“ Of all the preliminary steps, then, to the adjustment of this great question, by far the most important is the appointment of some means for training schoolmasters, not to any set of mechanical evolutions merely, but to a knowledge of the principles and practice of their profession, and to the able and enlightened discharge of its duties. The want of some such provision is the great vice of our Scottish system. Faults have thus crept

Extract from the Edinburgh Review. Reference to Prussia.

into the practice of our parish schools, which nothing but the removal of the cause will eradicate. Our readers are aware what consequence the Prussian lawgivers attached to this object; wisely considering that the best plans of teaching are a dead letter, without good and able teachers; and that to expect good teachers without good training, is to look for a crop without ploughing and sowing. In all their regulations on the subject of the *Schullehrer seminarien*, there is an anxious consideration of whatever can minister to the moral and intellectual improvement, and even to the personal comfort and happiness, of the young teachers, which reminds us more of the tenderness of parental care and admonition, than of the stern and authoritative precepts of law. Every department is enjoined to have one of these seminaries; the pupils to be admitted between sixteen and eighteen, to the number of from sixty to seventy in each; to be situated in towns of moderate size, that, on the one hand, they may be preserved from the corruption of very large ones, and, on the other, have access to schools which they can see and may improve in. The course of instruction delivered in these institutions presupposes that of the primary schools. Pupils are admitted, however, with whom it is advisable to go back on the primary instruction; and the first of the three years, which form the

No such Institutions in the Island of Great Britain.

complement of attendance for the whole course, is generally spent in revising and giving readier and fuller possession of previous acquirements. If that point, however, is already reached, it shortens the attendance by one year, and the pupil proceeds at once to the business of the second, which is employed in giving him just notions of the philosophy of teaching, the treatment of the young mind, the communication of knowledge, the arrangement of school business, the apparatus and evolutions necessary for arresting attention and husbanding time; of all, in fine, that pertains to the theory and practice of moral education, intellectual training, and methodical instruction,—technically called *Paedagogik*, *Didactik*, and *Methodik*. The third year is more particularly devoted to the object of reducing to practice, in the schools of the place, and in that which is always attached to the seminary, the methods and theory he has been made acquainted with. We refer for other details to our preceding number. It is more to our present purpose to remark, that there does not exist, nor ever has existed, in the island of Great Britain, a single institution of this kind, which the Prussian people think so useful, that they have voluntarily gone beyond the number prescribed by law. There were, at the close of 1831, thirty-three of these

Their Importance urged upon Parliament.

seminaries in the monarchy, which is more than one for each department or circle.*

“ We cannot but think, therefore, that some effort should be made to apply part, at least, of the Parliamentary grant to the purpose of training schoolmasters, if it were only to mark the opinion of Government of the importance and necessity of such establishments ; and to direct public attention to a branch of knowledge which, new and unexplored as it is amongst us, has long taken its place in the circle of the arts and sciences, and long had its literature and its votaries, in Germany. Anything approaching, indeed, to the universal and permanent organisation in that country (for it is by no means confined to Prussia,) it would of course be vain to expect in this, at least for many years to come ; but means of opening up the subject, and commanding it to the attention, not of teachers only, and patrons of schools, but of the public generally, need not be regarded as out of our reach. Might not, for example, a lectureship, or a professorship of the art of teaching (or, if a name be wanted for the new subject, of Didactics) be appended to one or two of the Scotch universities ;

* There are now more than 60.—AUTHOR.

Lectureships on School-keeping recommended in the Scotch Universities.

and, if such a novelty could not be engrafted on the old establishments of Oxford and Cambridge, tried, at least, in the infant institution of Durham? A very small endowment, if any, would be wanted, provided Parliament would make it imperative on candidates for vacant schools (beginning at first with those of the better kind only), to produce a certificate of having attended such a course, or even to undergo an examination on the subjects there treated.

“ It is obvious in contemplating such an arrangement as this, that the greatest difficulty would be to find fit persons for such an office,—a difficulty which would scarcely, however, last beyond the first appointment. And even with regard to that, we need scarcely look farther than to the burgh and parochial schoolmasters of Scotland. As a body, indeed, they are not beyond being greatly benefited by attendance on such a course as we propose; but there are men among them, and the number is on the increase, who, to an enthusiastic attachment to their profession, and a large experience of its practical details, add much knowledge of its principles acquired by reading, and reflection, and an almost intuitive perception of what is right in the management of the youthful faculties, and in the manner of imparting instruction. Philosophy and experience must go hand in hand, to fit a man

Necessity of Inspection. Required in Prussia and France.

for the purpose in view. If such lectureships were instituted in places where there was access also to schools in which the doctrines might be illustrated, the practice exemplified, and the teaching partly conducted by the student, we should accept it as the greatest boon that could be conferred on the parochial education of Scotland. There are few, perhaps none, of the defects that still cling to our parish schools which would not disappear under the wholesome influence of such a measure, carried ably and honestly into effect. For example, next to that measure itself, there is nothing more loudly called for to improve our parochial discipline, than a plan of authorised inspection. This, we have seen, is regarded as an essential part of the Prussian and French systems, and is executed by delegates appointed by the Minister of Public Instruction. It seems natural that the proposed lecturers, with assistants, if required, should have this arduous duty devolved upon them. Again, a well arranged succession of school-books is still a desideratum: none would be so likely to supply it well, as men whose lives would be devoted to the study of their art. But if such a project shall appear to some, as we are prepared to expect, visionary and impracticable, let strenuous endeavours be at least made to multiply the number and increase the efficiency of the model

Ques. whether Teachers' Seminaries should be Independent Institutions.

schools we have. There is an endowment for such an institution, called the Barrington School, at Bishop Auckland ; and the Metropolitan schools of both the societies are open, and have been used for such purposes, as far as their means would go. To improve and assist these would be a far more profitable way of expending the grant, than to build schools for the propagation of imperfect methods."

It is a practical question of no small importance whether, if the proposed seminaries are established, they shall exist as independent institutions, or in connexion with and dependency on other institutions already in being,—either colleges or academies. Much may be said, with great plausibility and force, on both sides of the question; especially in favour of their connexion with colleges. Here we have buildings, libraries, lecture rooms, apparatus, cabinets, and learned professors, already provided, without any new outlay of money, and nothing seems wanting but pupils to be trained to become the future educators of our children. The Edinburgh Review, in the paragraphs just quoted, advocates the adoption of this plan in Scotland. But, gentlemen, mark the grounds of this advocacy. It recommends the establishment of lectureships on school-keeping in the Scotch universities, not as the best plan in fact for the training of teachers, but as

Separate Organizations preferable. Reasons for this Preference.

probably the most feasible one, under existing circumstances ; that is, as far better than no plan at all for the attainment of this object.

This is exactly my own opinion in reference to this country ;—I refer here not to the question of feasibility, but to the comparative excellence of the two systems. No one can doubt that much would be gained to the cause of popular education, by having departments for the training of teachers connected with our colleges, and even with our County Grammar Schools ; but this admission is entirely distinct from any opinion as to whether that system is the best that could be adopted, or even the best that has been proposed. For myself, while I admit that those who differ from me have much that is weighty to urge in favour of their plan, I incline strongly to the belief that separate and independent organizations, though more costly, and even, if you please, less efficient, at first, would, in the end, secure the common object in view far better and more effectually than the appended and subordinate departments, which some worthy and judicious persons seem to desire.

In the first place, consider the constitutional tendencies of human nature, especially as displayed by young men in seminaries of education. He is but a novice in the philosophy of observation, who has not seen frequent manifestations of the

Its Effect on the Character of Teachers better.

strong disposition which exists in the young to "run" each other, as it is termed. Now the future schoolmasters, being generally young men in indigent circumstances, and belonging to a really subordinate department of the college, would infallibly become the butt for ridicule of the classical students,—the targets, as it were, at which sarcasm would aim her shafts; shafts not, indeed, pointed with poisoned metals, but still sharp enough to inflict momentary pain, and whose hits would sometimes leave festering wounds behind. No power on earth could prevent this, while human nature and the state of society remain what they are at present. It is easy to foresee what effect such a state of things would produce. It would either sour the minds of the future teachers, and impart a certain ferocity to their temper and disposition; or it would beget a mortifying sense of inferiority, destructive of all proper self-respect and personal independence.

Again: It is admitted, on all hands, that the profession of teaching ought to be as respectable as any other in society; and that it must become so, before it can be productive of all the benefits, which it is capable of achieving. It is also known, by all who know any thing about the delicate relations of cause and effect, how much men's feelings and opinions are influenced by names, appear-

Also on their Respectability and Qualifications.

ances, and airy nothings, or that which seems little more substantial. Now the respectability of teaching will and must depend somewhat on the respectability of the institutions where instructors are trained. And will any man tell me that mere departmental appendages to colleges and academies can become as respectable in the eyes of the community, as original, independent institutions, with their own presidents, professors, buildings, libraries, apparatus, and all the other paraphernalia of educational establishments? It is impossible in the nature of things; and few, I imagine, will maintain that they can.

I shall content myself, and dismiss the argument, with one further consideration on this point. It is this: The young men who are preparing themselves to be teachers, will not be as well taught, either theoretically or practically, in the proposed college departments, as they would be in the teachers' seminary. You will not, I trust, misunderstand me here. Had I intended to cast any slur upon college instruction, I certainly would not address myself to a college Professor. All that I mean to say, and what I firmly believe, is, that Professors in colleges would not feel the same interest in their lectures and instructions to the pupils of a subordinate department in their respective institutions, that would be felt by the Pro-

General Principles on which Teachers' Seminaries ought to be founded.

fessors in a Normal Seminary, where instructions of the kind in question would constitute their sole business. And besides this, the modes of teaching, adapted to common schools and to colleges, are so different, so almost opposite to each other, that it is no disparagement to an eminent and highly successful Professor in a college, to say that he is not the most fit person to instruct those who are to become the teachers of children. Teachers in colleges cannot properly be selected with much reference to their fitness for such a task ; while the very reverse would be true of the Normal school. There such qualification would be all in all. If it be said that one Professor at least in each college would be so chosen ; my reply is, that in the teachers' seminaries *all* would be selected upon this principle. From these premises the conclusion seems fairly deducible that the future educators would themselves be better educated in seminaries with independent organizations, than in departments connected with collegiate institutions.

Having thus strenuously urged the necessity of founding teachers' seminaries, and briefly intimated my reasons for preferring a separate organization for them, I will venture upon one or two suggestions as to the general principles on which, as it seems to me, they ought to be established. Two leading results should be aimed at,—first, a supply

Two leading Results to be aimed at.

of good instructors, and then, some security that their services will be given, at least for a few years, to the state in which they are educated.

The candidate for the profession of teaching, in order to become suitably prepared for his work, must learn two things;—he must learn to *know*, and he must learn to *teach*, two branches of knowledge quite distinct in their nature, and not by any means always found in union with each other. Every Normal Seminary must propose to itself to communicate both these branches to its pupils. But what ought the pupils to learn to *know*? The view given in the last chapter of the education proper for the people determines that which would be suitable for their teachers. The wants of the people must be exclusively consulted here. As religious and moral culture was there shown to be the object first in importance in the education of the young, so it should be made of paramount weight in the training of the future educators. Above all things else, they ought to be made familiar with the histories, whether of individuals or of nations, contained in the Bible; with its pure and unequalled code of morality; with the evidences for its divine origin; and with a general outline of the history of the true religion in all ages and countries. For the rest, they should receive appropriate instructions on all those other sciences which they will

Teachers must learn to *know* and to teach.

afterwards have to teach themselves. "The object of these instructions should be not to make the students profound mathematicians, [naturalists,] philosophers, or divines, but to impart to them a clear and comprehensive view of all those subjects of a practical nature which may be level to the comprehension of the bulk of mankind, which may present them with delightful objects of contemplation, which may have a bearing on their [own] present and future happiness," and increase their ability to be useful to others.

Instructions of this kind should be accompanied with others designed to give the learners a knowledge of, and skill in, the practical part of their future duties. The principles of the juvenile mind, the science of school-government, the means of rendering the pursuit of knowledge attractive to the young, the plan and routine of study, the division of time, the arrangement and management of classes, the moral treatment of pupils, the punishment of offences, the best modes of illustration, and whatever else appertains to the practical instruction and management of a school, should be fully unfolded, and illustrated in minute detail. For this purpose it is indispensable that one or more elementary model-schools should be attached to each teacher's seminary, where the future instructor can have constant opportunities both of seeing

How can the services of Teachers be secured to the State ?

his own teachers conduct the class exercises, and of hearing recitations himself under the eye of those who will be able to correct his errors, to foster his excellencies, and to lead him on step by step to that practical acquaintance with the duties of his profession, which will be the pledge of his success and the measure of his usefulness.

The question of securing the services of these men, after they shall have completed their course of studies, to the state in which they were educated, is perhaps one of greater practical difficulty. It is a question on which, I confess, I have not bestowed much thought, but the object contemplated I believe to be entirely attainable. Permit me to suggest one method, not as the only, or even the best means of attaining it, but as one which has occurred to my own mind. It is somewhat similar to that employed by the General Government to secure a like object in reference to the cadets educated at West Point. Let the state not charge any of the seminarists more than one half the actual cost of their education, and let her exact from each on entering a written pledge, guarantied by friends, to follow the profession of teaching for a specified number of years, say from three to five, and to exercise it within her limits during that period,—unless, on changing his purpose, he first pay back to the state the whole sum

Details more difficult. No Models in this Country.

with interest, expended on his education. Something like this, if I remember right, is required of each pupil on entering the Normal schools of Prussia. Let the state add to this a judicious system of annual or triennial rewards, or honorary distinctions to be conferred on such as distinguish themselves by the ability and faithfulness with which they discharge their duties; and the end desired would, I can scarcely doubt, be already well nigh secured.

On the soundness of these organic principles for teachers' seminaries, I do not entertain the least doubt; but in forming such an institution, an almost endless quantity of details would be requisite, in reference to which, I frankly avow, I should be at great loss in making up an opinion, and I doubt not many others would find themselves in the same uncertainty. How can these doubts and the hesitation consequent upon them be removed? In most matters of importance, where it is a question how we shall proceed ourselves, it is usual to consult the experience of others. But whither shall we look for the lights of experience on this momentous question? There is not, as far as I am informed, a single institution of the kind proposed, established by any state in this confederacy. The departments instituted for this purpose by the state of New York, as mere appendages to a few of the

The Departments in New York no exception to this.

County Grammar Schools, cannot be considered as forming an exception to this remark. Mr. Dix, the able Superintendent of Common Schools in that state, is not at all satisfied with this plan. He says, “If the foundations of the whole system of public instruction in New York were to be laid over, it would be advisable to create separate seminaries for the education of teachers.” There is an institution for the training of teachers in Andover, Mass., under the care of the Rev. S. Hall, the author of several valuable works on education, which is said to have been very useful in its influence on common schools in that state; but, if I am correctly informed, it is not in any way connected with or dependent on the civil authorities of the commonwealth. And these establishments are, as far as my knowledge goes, the extent to which measures have been put in actual operation for the specific object of educating teachers in this country!

Whither, then, I ask again, shall we turn our eyes for light to resolve our doubts, and models that may help us in our hour of need? To Prussia certainly, where institutions of the kind in question are best organized, have been longest in operation, and have produced the most important results. I have said, and it will not be denied, that it is customary, in important matters, to con-

Must consult the Experience of other Nations, especially Prussia.

sult the experience of others. Is not this done in all the learned professions, and in every pursuit of life? Are not agents often employed for this purpose by individuals, by colleges, by incorporated companies, and even by sovereign states? Suppose, for example, we were to hear of the discovery of some new principle in mechanics, more valuable than any hitherto discovered, or of a new application of some principle previously known, and to learn that in some European country it had been applied to machinery with complete success; suppose, further, that we were desirous of introducing this new principle, or application, as the case might be, into our own manufactories, would we do it upon the mere representation of books, however well written or scientific? No, surely; it is not in this way that men act, where important pecuniary interests are involved. We would pursue a wiser course; we would send out some capable person, commissioned to make a thorough examination, and to bring back, not merely a written report, and plans on paper, but also his own personal knowledge, derived from personal observation. This is, in fact, often done. It is needless to enumerate cases; they are so common, that the memory of every man of the least information will supply them in abundance.

Let those states, then, that really desire to found

The sending out of Agents recommended.

systems of public instruction, fitted to bless the present generation, and worthy of being transmitted to posterity, act with the ordinary wisdom of intelligent individuals in undertaking an important enterprise. If they would set themselves intelligently about the first duty of a free state—to diffuse knowledge and virtue among its citizens—let them commission competent agents to visit the Prussian schools,* who shall be charged to take a general survey of the operation of the whole system, and to remain long enough at one of the best of the Normal seminaries to become perfectly familiar with all its organic principles, its details of arrangement, its modes of intercourse, discipline, and instruction, its examinations, and, in short, with every thing appertaining to it in all its aspects and relations. After an adequate examination, let them return and spread the result of their inquiries severally before the states by whom they were employed. These will then be prepared to try the experiment of educating teachers under the most favourable circumstances, and if they

* This has actually been done by Ohio; a state which, though comparatively young, is already far in advance of many of her elder sisters, in her schools, her internal improvements, her eleemosynary institutions, and various other points of her public policy.

Expense no Objection. Cousin's Report Deficient.

fail, it will not be for the reason that, with a penny-wise pound-foolish policy, they groped their way in the dark, because they feared the expense of procuring those lights, which were within their reach. No objection, as it seems to me, could be made by any state to such a procedure, but its expense. Yet what would the expense be? A few thousand dollars at most—a mere nothing in comparison with the magnitude of the object to be secured.

It may, indeed, be urged as a plea to obviate the necessity of the course recommended, that we have the Report of Cousin on the state of Education in Prussia, and we may be called upon to say what need there is of further light. It is true that the eminent philosopher and educationist referred to, performed the duty assigned him with an ability honourable alike to himself and the French nation; and his Report is a mine of valuable information concerning Prussia, and of just principles in relation to education in general. But Cousin was not long enough in Prussia to become thoroughly conversant with her educational institutions.* His Report presents us with a variety

* He arrived there on the 5th of June, 1831, and left about the 1st of July of the same year.

Would answer for France, but not adapted to our circumstances.

of minute details in reference to the economy and regulations of the Normal schools, but he gives us no clear idea of the manner in which the various branches of knowledge are taught to those who are themselves to become the teachers of the primary schools. This, in fact, was hardly necessary under the circumstances; for he was to return, and to superintend in person the establishment of the national schools in France. Besides, it should be borne in mind that he wrote for a people differing widely from ours in their manners, customs, institutions, laws, form of government, and the whole structure of society. What the citizens of our several states need for their complete satisfaction is an examination by one of themselves,—a man familiar with their institutions and with their habitudes of thought, feeling, and action, who should pursue his investigations into the system with a constant reference to the question of its availability for their own republican purposes. They require for their guidance not only a Report from such a man, but that deep familiarity with the spirit of the system, and that intimate acquaintance with the minutiae of its arrangements, and with its special modes of instruction, which can be gained only by personal inspection, and can never be fully shadowed forth in

A Report from one of our own Countrymen needed.

a written Report. Between a mere composition, however eloquent or able, and this full, fresh, breathing knowledge, there is the same difference that there is between a marble statue and a living man.

CHAPTER IV.

COMPENSATION OF TEACHERS.

Present inadequate Compensation of Teachers—No Class in the Community so poorly rewarded—Wages of Mechanics and other Manual-Labourers as compared with the pay of School-Masters—Compensation of Instructors as indicated by the School-Returns of Massachusetts and New York—Alarming Nature of the Facts disclosed by these Returns—Manifold Evils of this ill-judged Parsimony—Examination into the Claims of Competent and Faithful Teachers to receive a liberal Reward—Justice requires it—Sound Policy requires it—Teachers should be supplied with the Means of maintaining a Family—The Question, what would be a fair average Salary? considered—Inquiry into the Cost of the System recommended—Twenty Millions a Year for the Whole United States—This Sum compared with the Object in View and the Advantages that would result from the Attainment of the Object—Whence is the Money to come?—This Question dispassionately answered—First, from the Annual Proceeds arising from the Sale of Public Lands—Secondly, from the Interest of the Surplus Revenue deposited with the States—Thirdly, from the Avails of present and additional Grants of Land for this Purpose—These three Sources would give ten Millions a Year—The other ten Millions to be raised by the Districts themselves—Those who refuse, to receive none of the Public Money—Present Endowments—Bequests—The Nation expends liberally for less important Objects—Florida War—Last War with Great Britain—Astounding Fact in relation to

Compensation of Teachers. Very inadequate.

the Cost of the Wars in which England was concerned between 1688 and 1815—Enough to Educate the whole World to the End of Time—Poverty and Economy of Nations when Education is to be provided for—Our Parsimony in maintaining Schools a National Disgrace—A more liberal Compensation to Schoolmasters essential to an efficient Education of the People—The necessary Expenditure really small in Comparison with our Resources and the Vastness of the Object to be gained.

THE compensation of teachers is a matter of great moment, and demands especial consideration in establishing a general and permanent system of popular education. There is no class in the community whose services are so poorly rewarded, in proportion to the labour required and the responsibility involved, as those of the primary schoolmaster. The average wages of mechanics is not less than a dollar and a half a day, which would give them an annual income of over four hundred dollars. Labourers on farms, in factories, and at most other occupations, can easily realize two hundred dollars a year, and frequently more.

How stands the matter with respect to schoolmasters? The school-returns in Massachusetts and New York, for the year 1834, show the following results: in the former of those states the average sum paid for instruction in each school-district for that year, was a hundred and fourteen

Shown by the School Returns of Massachusetts and New York.

dollars; in the latter, for the same year, it amounted to only seventy-two dollars. Yet the systems of Massachusetts and New York are much vaunted for their excellence, and compared with those of many other states they undoubtedly deserve all the praise that has been bestowed upon them; considered in themselves, however, they will be found to need great amendment, if not an entire reconstruction, before they can be said to have reached a proper elevation, and are capable of accomplishing the appropriate objects of such institutions. How is it with respect to the compensation of instructors in our own state? According to the best data in my possession for forming an estimate, not more than thirty dollars a year is paid for instruction in each school district; and this I believe to be rather an over-estimate than otherwise.

These facts are deeply humiliating: they are more; they are positively alarming. Is it possible for a government, based avowedly on popular intelligence, to repose in safety on schools maintained at so cheap a rate? The very scavengers, who clean the streets of our cities, are better paid for their filthy labour,* than men to whom is committed a trust that involves the highest interests of

* They get generally a dollar a day.

Evils of this Parsimony. Claims of faithful Schoolmasters.

society. No wonder that ignorant and thriftless adventurers make up the body of our teachers, that our children hate instruction, and that parents frequently complain that their money is thrown away on the common schools. No doubt it is often thrown away, and even worse than that, on men who would consent to labour in such a calling for so miserable a pittance.

The evils of this parsimonious, ill-judged policy are manifold. It bars the doors of our school-houses against competent instructers; it prevents young men from expending either time or money in preparing themselves to be teachers; it makes parents indifferent to common schools; it disgusts the young with the pursuit of knowledge; it renders the profession of teaching disreputable; and, worse than all, it produces a paralysis in the public mind in reference to the whole matter of popular education.

Let us look a little into the claims of a competent and faithful schoolmaster to receive a liberal compensation. It is a fair principle, and one that will scarcely be questioned, that men ought, other things being equal, to be rewarded for their work in proportion to the expense of preparation for it, the actual labour required, and the responsibility which it involves. I will not detain you, gentlemen, to expatiate on the time and money that must

Justice and Policy require that they should be well paid.

be expended in order to become properly qualified for the business of instruction; nor on the self-denial, toil, and wear of nerves which actual service requires; nor on the consequences which depend upon the manner in which the duties of the profession are performed,—consequences, which extend to every interest of society, and reach through all the relations and destinies of man. These things are undenialable; and if the principle above stated be a correct one, then the teachers of our common schools ought to receive more for their services than any other class, except the members of the learned professions. Sheer justice, then, would require that they be well paid; sound policy demands the same thing. It is indispensable to good schools; it is especially requisite in order to secure that great essential element of sound instruction, permanent continuance in the profession of teaching on the part of those engaged in it. Will men continue to exercise a calling for life, which does not supply them with the means of maintaining a family? It cannot be expected, and it ought not to be desired. Men who have studied the philosophy of the infant mind in their own children, and who are accustomed to rule well their own household, will be better qualified both to instruct and to govern a school, than those

Five Hundred Dollars a fair average Compensation.

who are deficient in this domestic experience and sympathy.

What, then, would be a fair average compensation for well qualified teachers of common schools,—men trained to the profession, and devoted to it for life? Any industrious mechanic, with but a moderate share of skill, can make four hundred hundred dollars a year, and many in fact realize much more than that as the annual proceeds of their labour. Would you give an able schoolmaster less? That were to declare that the construction of a steam-engine, the building of a house, or the manufacture of furniture for it, is both a worthier occupation and a more important matter than the education of your children. None, I am aware, will avow such a sentiment; but if it is practically acted upon, where is the difference? Four hundred dollars, with the use of a comfortable house, and a few acres of land, is the least average annual salary that ought to be thought of as an adequate compensation for the services of well qualified instructors. This would be equivalent to about five hundred dollars a year, and with such an average of remuneration, teachers of extraordinary merit would occasionally receive as high as eight, nine, or even ten hundred dollars per annum. These places would be the prizes to stimulate honourable ambition, the rewards of emi-

Cost to the whole United States of an adequate System of Education.

nent ability and success. This would very soon elevate teaching to the rank of a profession; make it respectable; enlist talent and worth in the work of instruction; and raise our schools to an elevation of excellence, that would fill the measure of our own glory, and command the admiration of the world; and what is of much more importance, purify our morals, enlarge our enjoyments, cement our union, and give stability to whatever in our institutions is worthy of a patriotic attachment.

How much would the establishment, by the several members of our confederacy, of systems of public instruction that should carry out these views, cost the whole United States? The number of free inhabitants at the present time is not less than twelve millions. It is estimated that about one-fourth of the population of a country ought to be in the common elementary schools. In Prussia, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, there is a little less, and in New York a fraction more than one-fourth in these schools. According to this calculation there are three millions of children in the United States, whose education ought to be provided for by the several states. An average of sixty pupils is enough to form a district. This would give fifty thousand districts for the whole Union; and an average compensation to each teacher of four hundred dollars per year would

Twenty millions a year. Not large in comparison with benefits resulting.

require an annual expenditure of twenty millions of dollars; or one million six hundred and sixty-six thousand six hundred and sixty-six dollars for every million of inhabitants.

This appears to be a vast sum, and I cannot deny that it is a very large one. Multitudes no doubt will be startled by it, and will be ready to exclaim, "it is an expenditure that will never be made for that object." But is there any insuperable obstacle in the way of it? Is the country too poor to bear this expenditure? Is the sum in fact a large one, when you place it by the side of the object in view, and the benefits it would certainly confer upon the nation? Consider what that object is. It is to elevate men to the proper dignity of their nature, by cultivating and improving their various powers of mind and body, by teaching them the nature and purposes of these powers, and by imparting to them as comprehensive a knowledge as possible of the animate and inanimate productions of Nature, and their relations to the human constitution. Consider also the benefits that would result from the attainment of this object. The happiness of society in its three great subdivisions of moral, mental, and physical pleasures, would be increased in a ratio that can now hardly be conceived of; our civil immunities would be established upon a basis that would ensure their perpetuity;

These benefits enumerated. Whence is the money to come.

our pecuniary interests themselves would be advanced; and an impulse be given to the great cause of human improvement, which would tell upon the history of remote tribes and distant ages. And now, Gentlemen, let me, in all sincerity, put it to you and to all other candid and intelligent men, whether twenty millions a year for the whole United States is not a *small* sum, when placed in juxtaposition with these unspeakable advantages. I feel confident, from such a jury, of a unanimous verdict in my favour.

But I hear the question pouring from all quarters on my ear, whence is this money to come? This is an important question, and I will endeavour to give it a dispassionate and rational answer. I will not detain you by descanting on how much can be saved from this luxury and that amusement, nor even upon the vast expenses of our very vices,—though more than enough for our purpose might be subtracted from what is expended in these ways, with scarcely any sensible diminution of the aggregate amount. But I will let all that pass, and leave every man in the quiet enjoyment of such means as he possesses, according to any plan that may chime with his own fancy; and will proceed at once to something more tangible and positive. I will show you how, by a wise and not over-liberal legislation on the part of the General and State

First from proceeds of Sales of Public Lands.

Governments, the sum required might be raised without any tedious delays.

It may be assumed as a postulate, that the receipts of the United States from the sale of the public lands, will amount, in a healthy state of the country, to an average of five millions a year. It is the opinion of many of our wisest statesmen, of both political parties, that this fund is the property of the states under the deeds of session by which the lands were ceded to the United States; and that, therefore, these lands cannot, of right, be considered as a part of the resources of the Union, for general revenue. This question I will not now stop to argue; nor is it essential for the attainment of our object that we should adopt one side or the other of it. It is enough that it be admitted, as I suppose it will be, universally, that it is competent to the General Government to make what disposition it pleases of the annual avails of these lands, provided it be for an object promotive of the general welfare. I propose, then, that these lands be set apart as a perpetual fund for the support of common schools, the yearly revenue from which shall be distributed to the states, in the ratio of their free population, for this object exclusively. The subtraction of this five millions from the general revenue would not be felt by an individual being in the whole country, and the appropriation of it in the

Gov. Vance's Opinion. Goes even beyond the Author's.

way proposed would furnish at once one-fourth of the whole sum required for the diffusion of education, and that of a high order, among all the people of this Union.

Since the above paragraph was written, an extract from Governor Vance's recent Message to the legislature of Ohio, has fallen under my notice. It was with no ordinary pleasure that I found in it confirmation of the soundness and propriety of the suggestions I have ventured to make respecting the proceeds of the public lands, from a statesman, so enlightened, so patriotic, and so sober in all his views, as the present Governor of Ohio. Governor Vance goes even a step beyond me, and declares it as his opinion that the fund legally and equitably belongs to this object, and that congress, in giving it that direction, would not, strictly speaking, entitle itself to the praise of generosity, but would have done nothing more than fulfil a sacred trust, the execution of which is called for by every principle of justice.

"One of the first objects," he says, "that should attract the attention of every statesman, is the habits, condition, and future prospects of the youth of the state. Through them we may read the future destiny of the republic, for good or for evil. If we suffer them to grow up in idleness and ignorance, we must look to the future with forebodings

This Fund legally and equitably belongs to this Object.

of the misery and the degradation that await our descendants. Whilst on the other hand, if we give them industrious habits, guard well their morals, and improve their minds, we may fondly anticipate that our institutions will be perpetuated, and our descendants grow up and continue in the enjoyment of freedom, independence, and prosperity.

“The means of attaining this desirable end, must be had through our common schools; and although much has been done in our own as well as several of our sister states, in the great cause of education and common schools, yet there is still much to be done to perfect the system, so as to bring within the reach of our whole population the means of a thorough common school education.

“*The fund that legally and equitably belongs to this object, is the proceeds of the sales of the public lands. By giving it this direction, which is loudly called for by every principle of justice, congress would do nothing more than fulfil a sacred trust; whilst by withholding it they incur a heavy responsibility to a class of our fellow-citizens, whose wants should be the first object of their solicitude and attention.”*

The disposition, here recommended, of the annual avails of the public domain, would, as we have already seen, furnish one-fourth of the sum shown to be necessary for the maintenance of

Second Source. Interest of the Moneys deposited with the States.

good popular schools; but where are the remaining three-fourths to come from? Let us cast about a little to ascertain whether there are any other resources at hand. When the late Deposite Act shall have been carried into full effect, thirty-six millions of dollars will have been distributed to the several states. It is not probable that this money will ever be demanded back; but, to make assurance doubly sure, I propose that it be given to the states with whom it is deposited, on the condition that the interest of it be devoted for ever to the sole object of improving and maintaining popular schools; and that it be withdrawn from those states that decline this condition. The interest of this fund, allowing a sufficiency of it for the expenses of its due management, will be two millions more towards the amount needed.

Whither shall we look for a third resource to aid us in our work? Ten millions of acres of the public lands have already been granted to the different western states for the support of common schools. These lands are now worth on an average at least three dollars an acre; probably much more. Those of Michigan were sold last summer, during the height of the money pressure, and brought from eight to four hundred and fifty dollars per acre, or an average of about twenty dollars. I propose that an additional ten millions of

Appropriations of Lands. Lastly, Moneys raised by Districts.

acres, of equal value, be given to the other states; and these grants, when sold, would constitute a fund of at least sixty millions of dollars, the interest on which would be three millions annually, over and above the most liberal allowance for the expense of managing it.

We have now ten millions of the twenty we have shown to be requisite. Now let the several states in this Union say to each school district within their respective limits,—We will place two hundred dollars a year in your treasury, provided you will double the sum out of your own funds,—and who can doubt that a great majority of the districts would at once, and thankfully, receive the boon on the condition offered? And the number that might now refuse to comply with such terms, would, in less than ten years, be dwindled to a mere handful; if, indeed, as is more probable, the non-complying districts were not all, ere that time, numbered with the quiddities of the schoolmen. But it would not be necessary, after a few years, to tax the districts even in the proportion here supposed. There are common-school funds in the different states already endowed, which yield an aggregate annual income of nearly or quite a million of dollars. And let but a sufficient impulse be once given, let the breeze of popular favour set fairly in the direction of national education, and

Present Endowments. Individual Bequests. Florida War.

liberal-minded individuals will not be wanting, who, by bequests and otherwise, will endow favourite districts with funds sufficient to support their teachers; and the spectacle even may yet be seen of some future Wills, Girard, or Smithson thus providing a perpetuity of instruction for all the common schools in a whole township. Hundreds of thousands of dollars may in this way, at no very distant period, be annually realised for the cause in whose behalf we are pleading. Does any one say to me, because I have presented these calculations and propositions, as Festus on a certain occasion said to Paul,—Thou art beside thyself?—I adopt the noble reply of Paul, and give it in the full confidence that it is a just one,—**I AM NOT MAD, BUT SPEAK FORTH THE WORDS OF TRUTH AND SOBERNESS.**

Does the nation expend grudgingly on other objects, and those of incomparably less importance? Has not the war in which she is now engaged with a paltry handful of Seminole Indians, already cost her, *out of her treasury*, over twenty-five millions of dollars, and, *indirectly*, many millions more? And will she not expend twice and even thrice that sum, if need be, before she will give over the contest, and succumb to her foe? No one complains of this, if there is no waste in the expen-

Its Expense. Cost of last War with Great Britain.

diture. All applaud, however much they may regret it. Did we not expend more than a hundred millions of dollars in carrying on the last war with Great Britain? I was not old enough at that time to have any opinion of my own on the politics of the country; but my father fought in that war, and I have not yet seen cause to honour him the less for it. But, at the same time, it is a fact, that I desire to be distinctly known, I would have it told in Gath, and published in Askelon, and committed to the four winds to be borne to every corner of the country, that, if an amount, equal to the cost of that war, had been then invested and suffered to accumulate to the present time, it would constitute a sum, the bare interest of which would be more than the most ardent, and, if you please, extravagant, friend of education could ask for the maintenance of an adequate number of first-rate popular schools throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Mr. Dick has shown that the wars in which England was engaged between 1688 and 1815, a period of one hundred and twenty-seven years, cost that nation eleven thousand six hundred and sixty-five millions of dollars. It is reasonable to suppose that the nations against which those wars were waged, expended an equal sum; and, if so, it gives us a grand total of twenty-three thousand

Vast Expense of Wars of Europe between 1688 and 1815.

three hundred and thirty millions of dollars as the cost of wars in which Great Britain was concerned during that comparatively short period. Let us, however, make every allowance for an overestimate, and call it twenty thousand millions. How much would this sum do towards educating the world? If we estimate the present population of the globe at eight hundred millions, there will be of this number two hundred millions, of an age suitable for attending school. An average of eighty pupils would give two millions five hundred thousand schools for the whole world. Twenty thousand millions of dollars divided among these would give each eight thousand. Three thousand dollars of this would be enough to purchase and improve twenty acres of land, to erect a house sufficient to accommodate the school and the teacher's family, and to provide suitable apparatus for illustrating the simpler principles of chemistry and experimental philosophy. Five thousand dollars would still remain to each school, which, if invested at an interest of six per cent., would yield three hundred dollars a year. Thus, the wars of Europe, for the brief period of only a hundred and odd years, have cost an amount of money sufficient to establish popular schools on the most liberal scale throughout the whole world, and to supply them with suitable instruction to the end of

An equal sum would educate the whole world to the end of time.

time! Truly, when ambition and revenge are to be gratified, when tyranny is to be supported, when the human race is to be slaughtered by millions, when the demon of war is to be unchained, and all the arts of mischief and destruction which he has devised, are to be brought into operation,—there is no want of funds to carry such schemes into effect. But when it is a question of elevating man to his proper place in the scale of mental and moral being, and thus augmenting his happiness beyond all calculation, the eyes of nations are suddenly opened to behold their poverty, economy becomes the first of national duties, and Government, from an excessive regard for the people's money, refuses to provide for the people's most important interests.

How long shall this ill-judged parsimony in the support of schools *continue* to be practised by us, and be permitted to remain as a blot and stain upon our national escutcheon? That a more liberal compensation to schoolmasters is essential to an efficient education of the people, is generally admitted. It has now been shown how this object can be accomplished, and that at a comparatively early date, by the exercise of a moderate share of liberality and clear-sightedness in the General and State Governments. Will the nation authorise the necessary expenditure?—an expenditure, be it re-

Earnest Appeal for a more liberal Policy on this Matter.

membered, though large in itself, yet really small in comparison with our resources as a nation; and the vast objects to be secured by it. 'Tis an outlay of money, not for the gratification of ambition, not for the butchery of mankind, not for any of those sinister ends which are so often at the bottom of laws apparently patriotic,—but to elevate the people and multiply their enjoyments; to diffuse knowledge and promote virtue; to confirm and perpetuate liberty; an outlay, too, which, if there be any force in an argument urged at some length in the first chapter of this work, will be returned more than fourfold into her lap. And force there must be in that argument, unless it can be shown that up to a certain point education may be useful in promoting the pecuniary interests of a country, but that, beyond that point, it is not available for the same purpose,—which is an obvious absurdity. And even if it were not, it would be a subject of endless dispute to determine where the separating line was, and as impossible to settle as any frivolous question that ever tasked the scholastic acumen of the dark ages. Let this Nation, then, weigh well her responsibility in this matter, and decide the momentous question whether or not her popular schools shall be of the right stamp, according to an enlightened perception of sound policy, and a just sense of moral obligation.

CHAPTER V.

BOOKS, CABINETS, AND APPARATUS—LOCATION
AND ARCHITECTURE OF SCHOOL HOUSES.

Aversion of Children to Study—Knowledge the natural Food of the Mind—Misdirected Love of Knowledge the Occasion of the Fall of Man—Pleasures of Knowledge exemplified in the Cases of Archimedes and Sir Isaac Newton—Solution of the apparent Contradiction involved in the general Aversion to Study and the innate Love of Knowledge—Attributable to the Want of good School-Books and the Prevalence of bad Methods of Instruction—Any other Explanation would impugn the Wisdom and Goodness of God—Decision of Reason on this Point—Testimony of Experience—Various Cases referred to—Letter of a Young Man mentioned by Mr. Combe—Branches of Learning pursued in German Boarding-Schools—The Teacher the Friend of his Pupils—Inspection and Explanation of Machinery—Pedestrian Excursions into the Country—Last several Weeks—Pupils required to write Journals—The Author's own Practice while Principal of the Edgehill School—Its Results—Improvements made in School-Books of late Years—Higher Improvements needed—Difficulty of preparing Text-Books of a proper Character—Requires a high Order of Talent and great Learning and Experience—General Principles on which all School-Books should be constructed—Class-Books now in use compared with this Standard—Verbal Instruction instead of real—Philosophy of the Infant Mind should be studied—The Leadings of Nature followed—Lessons on Objects—Biographies—Stories of Real Life—Im-

Aversion of Children to Study. Knowledge the Food of the Mind.

portance of Truth—Reading—Books on Natural History and cognate Sciences—Misapprehension guarded against—Miscellaneous Library—Of what Classes of Works to be composed—Cabinets of Natural History—Chemical and Philosophical Apparatus—Influence of these Aids—Location and Architecture of School-houses—Objects of Importance—Present Defects—Improvements recommended.

THE books, cabinets, and apparatus suitable for the use of common schools constitute an important question to be considered in forming a general system of education for the people. The aversion of children to study has long been proverbial. Yet knowledge is the natural food of the mind. The soul craves it as instinctively as a new-born infant desires the milk that nourishes its tender frame. It was the desire of knowledge, misdirected and stimulated to an undue degree by an artful master of the human heart, that

“Brought death into the world, and all our wo,
With loss of Eden.”

And the pursuit of knowledge, which always yields a calm satisfaction, when prosecuted upon principles which do not violate the laws of our intellectual being, is sometimes attended with a delight as intense as that which accompanies a sudden influx of wealth, a successful canvass for high

Pleasures of Knowledge. Cause of Aversion to Study.

office, or a brilliant military victory. Witness the almost frantic exultation of Archimedes on the discovery of a method for testing the purity of the golden crown of Hiero; and the still more remarkable manifestation of delight in the great Newton, when, on verifying his theory of gravitation, as he approached the end of his calculations and saw that his abstract ratiocination was about to be confirmed by the results of observation, the intensity of this pleasure deprived him of all power over the nerves of motion, and he was obliged to call in the aid of another hand to complete the operation.

Can the aversion to study alluded to above, and this innate love of knowledge, be reconciled with each other? The two views would seem to involve a palpable contradiction; yet they are susceptible of a satisfactory solution. The true reason why study is not generally a source of pleasure to the young will be found, unless I greatly err, in the want of school-books prepared on sound philosophical principles, and the prevalence of those unphilosophical methods of instruction, which have arisen out of the employment of ignorant and inexperienced teachers. The soul cries after knowledge, and lifts up its voice for understanding; and its importunities are answered with words, words, words—*vox et præterea nihil*. It asks for *bread*, and it receives *air*.

Our Faculties adapted to Learning. Decision of Reason.

Any other explanation, it seems to me, would be an impugning of both the wisdom and goodness of the Creator. He has implanted in the human soul an ardent thirst for knowledge. He has endowed it with capacities fitted to rise from object to object, and to range from system to system, in an endless search after truth, and an eternal approximation towards the Source of Truth. He has expressly declared in his Word that it is not good for the soul to be without knowledge; and, if the principles of analogy, and the earnest longings of the soul itself, nay, if various not obscure passages in the Sacred Scriptures, afford ground for a judgment, the pursuit of knowledge,—the everlasting study of the works and ways of God,—will form the principal employment and happiness of eternity. And can these glorious truths be reconciled with the wisdom and benevolence of such a mental constitution as necessarily makes the *act* of learning a mere drudgery and weariness—an object of disgust and hatred? Reason, speaking from the temple of Truth, where she is the presiding divinity, utters an emphatic negative. The healthy and assured growth of the mind, the mastery over general principles, and the growing ability to apply them successfully in the investigation of truth and the attainment of

Testimony of Experience. Various Examples.

knowledge, cannot but yield a pleasure pure, satisfying, and durable.

What says Experience? Her testimony, when fairly given, is equally clear and decisive. Of this any one may easily satisfy himself by entering the school of an instructor who understands the mechanism of the human mind, and adapts his instructions to the principles of its structure. I have seen the attention of mere children as steadily fixed, and their interest as warmly excited, in receiving elementary instructions on the dry subject of Latin Grammar, as they could have been in listening to the graphic details of some interesting story. I have seen the attention of a class of over thirty lads kept up for more than an hour, without the least appearance of weariness in a single instance, by a recitation in Sallust. There are, in fact, probably few persons who have not beheld how the young, when a skilful instructor has been communicating new truths to them in an intelligible manner, have hung upon his lips, and drunk in his words, as the thirsty earth imbibes the refreshing shower. A distinguished member of the editorial profession informed me that, when engaged in teaching, in his younger days, he had a class of young ladies in Paley's Natural Theology. He was unable at first to excite any interest in it; and the class continued to

German Boarding-schools. Branches taught in them.

complain of its dryness, till he hit upon the plan of presenting sensible illustrations of its principles, when suddenly Paley became the most popular and fascinating study in the school ; and most even of the other pupils, though dismissed and at liberty to go home, regularly remained to listen to the recitation on that author.

A young gentleman, mentioned by Mr. Combe, in his Lectures on Education, in writing from Cassel to his friend in Edinburgh, presents the following lively and instructive picture of the German boarding-schools. "In German boarding-schools," he says, "natural history is a prominent object of pursuit, and the boys are instructed in the outlines of Zoology, Ornithology, Entomology, and Mineralogy. This, I believe, is a branch of education never taught in seminaries of the same description in Britain ; but it is devoured by the learners on the continent with the utmost avidity. *There the teacher is not an object of fear, but the friend of his pupils.* He takes them, about once a fortnight, to visit some manufactory in the neighbourhood, where they are generally received with kindness, and are conveyed through the whole building by the owners, who seem to have pleasure in pointing out the uses of the various parts of the machinery, and in explaining to their juvenile visitors the different operations that are car-

Examination of Manufactories. Pedestrian Excursions.

ried on. Suppose, for example, that an expedition is undertaken to a paper-mill; the boys begin their scrutiny by inspecting the rags in the condition in which they are at first brought in; then they are made to remark the processes of cutting them, of forming the paste, of sizing the paper, &c., with the machinery by which all this is executed. On their return, they are required to write out an account of the manufactory, and of the operations performed in it, and of the manufactured article.

“During the summer months, pedestrian excursions are undertaken, extending to a period of perhaps two, three, or four weeks. Every thing worthy of attention is pointed out to the boys as they go along; and deviations are made on all sides, for the purpose of inspecting every manufactory, old castle, or other remarkable objects in the neighbourhood. Minerals, plants, and insects are collected as they proceed, and thus they begin early to appreciate and enjoy the beauties of external nature. If they happen to be travelling in the mountainous districts of the Hartz, they descend into the mines, and see the methods of excavating the ore, working the shafts, and ventilating and draining the mine. Ascending again to the surface, they become acquainted with the machinery by which the minerals are brought up, the processes of separating the ore from the sulphur, and

The Effect of these Journeys beneficial on Mind and Body.

the silver from the lead, and the mode in which the former metal is coined into money.

“ Having become familiar with these operations, the boys next, perhaps, visit the iron works, and here a new scene of gratification is opened up to their faculties. The furnaces, the principles of the different kinds of bellows, the methods of casting the iron and forming the moulds,—every thing, in short, is presented to their senses, and fully expounded to them. In like manner, they are taken to the salt works, and manufactories of glass, porcelain, acids, alkalies, and other chemical bodies, with which that part of Germany abounds. If any mineral springs be in the neighbourhood, these are visited, and the nature and properties of the waters explained. In short, no opportunity is neglected, by which additions to their knowledge may be made. This knowledge, too, is of a kind that remains indelibly written on their memory, and that is often recalled in after life with pleasure and satisfaction.

“ These journeys not only have a beneficial effect on the mind, but also conduce, in no small degree, to the growth and consolidation of the body. They are performed by short and easy stages so as not to occasion fatigue.

“ On their return home, the boys write an account of their travels, in which they describe the

Boys required to write an Account of them.

nature of the country through which they have passed, and its various productions, minerals, and manufactures. This is corrected and improved by the teacher. The minerals and plants which have been collected, serve at school to illustrate the lessons. The boys also go through a regular course of study, and receive lessons in religion, geography, French, and the elements of geometry. They are taught also the elements of astronomy ; not merely the abstract particulars generally given in courses of geography in Britain, relative to the moon's distance, the diameter and period of revolution of the earth, and the like, but also the relative positions of the principal constellations. The figure of cubes, cones, octagons, pyramids, and other geometrical figures, are impressed upon the minds of the junior boys by pieces of wood, cut in the proper shapes. Latin is taught to those who particularly desire it. Poles are erected in the garden for gymnastics, and boys receive every encouragement to take muscular exercise.”

I offer no apology for the length of this extract, because, apart from its interesting statements of fact, it shows how much pleasure the pursuit of knowledge affords, when things are learned instead of words, and the faculties of observation and reflection are called into active exercise ; and because,—I may perhaps be pardoned the vanity of

The Author's practice while Principal of the Edgehill School.

saying,—it confirms the wisdom of what I was myself in the constant habit of doing in my conduct of the Edgehill School. The same principle was there adopted, though it was not carried out to the full extent described above. The pupils were always, during the summer months, and sometimes in the winter, taken once or twice on an excursion of fifteen to twenty miles, in the course of which the most interesting objects were sought out, their attention was directed to a minute examination of them, they were required to take notes of their observations, and, on their return, a full description in writing of all they had seen, and of all that had happened, was exacted of each one. Whenever any day of extraordinary interest had passed, such as the Fourth of July, Christmas, New Year's, or the College Commencement, it was usual to require a descriptive composition on it from the whole school. This also was frequently the case with respect to the ordinary holidays, when they had been wandering abroad under the care of their teachers. These were found to be among the most improving as well as pleasing exercises within the range of school duties.

Reason and experience, then, unite in declaring that there is nothing in study inherently displeasing and irksome to the young; but that, on the contrary, the pursuit of knowledge on principles in

The Acquisition of Knowledge may always be a Source of Pleasure.

harmony with our mental constitution, is eminently fitted to afford pleasure as well as profit. Good class-books, wise modes of conveying truth to the mind, a due intermixture of experiment and sensible illustration with study, and the possession by the teacher of copious knowledge, a ready imagination, and a lively interest in and sympathy with his pupils, will always make the school-room a pleasant place, and the acquisition of knowledge a never-failing spring of gratification.

I am not of the number of those who hold the modern empiricism that learning may be made a mere pastime. It is the law of the Creator that nothing really valuable can be gained without labour. Nor am I disposed to deny that, with perhaps some changes for the worse, many and important improvements have been made of late years in school-books.* But, notwithstanding this admission, it is clear that this class of works has not hitherto enlisted that amount of learning, that

* Mr. Emerson's four class-books, designed to teach reading in common schools, are decidedly the best for that purpose that have ever fallen under my notice. They proceed upon the philosophical principle of the progressive development of the infant faculties; and are really very great improvements on the books formerly in use.

School-books. High Order of Talent required to write them.

reach of experience, and that order of talent, which are essential to the production of such books as are needed. Nothing is easier than to write school-books of a certain kind; but such as will stand the test of sound criticism, and commend themselves to the judgment of the truly wise, are extremely difficult of execution. To combine the requisite brevity with just that degree of fulness which is necessary to excite and gratify the ardent imagination of the young, to be simple without degenerating into puerility, to seize upon the most important truths and the fittest mode of communicating them, and, above all, to conduct the learner always by judicious gradations, from the simplest elements of knowledge to the sublime revelations of science and the eternal principles of morality,—these constitute a labour that may well task the powers of the most gifted and best furnished minds.

There are a few general principles which every writer and compiler of class-books for the use of common schools, ought to take for his guide, and of which he should never for a moment lose sight. First, the subject, the thoughts, and the language, should be level to the comprehension of the persons for whom the works are intended. Secondly, the utmost pains should be taken to im-

Principles on which to be prepared. Examination of Books now in use.

part to every portion of them a high moral tone, or at least to exclude every thing in the smallest degree immoral in its tendency. Thirdly, every page, and even every paragraph, ought to be made to convey some useful knowledge. And fourthly, facts alone should be introduced, to the entire exclusion of fiction of every kind.

Will the class-books now in use in our common schools stand the test of an examination on these principles? Alas, it is not many years since that every one of them was violated upon nearly every page of these works; and the old books still maintain a good portion of the ground against those prepared upon a somewhat improved plan. Books consisting of extracts, elegant in themselves, but altogether incomprehensible to young children, were universally, and still are to a considerable extent, placed in the hands of the learner, as soon as he had achieved a doubtful conquest over the reading lessons in the spelling-book. Nor was this all, or even the worst. Many of the extracts were immoral in their tendency, inasmuch as they were calculated to feed the sentiments of pride, ambition, and revenge, and to excite an admiration of war, if not a taste for it, by the praises lavished upon the so called heroism of some of the foulest and most wholesale murderers the earth ever produced ;—the Alexanders, the Cæsars, and the

Instruction is verbal. Should be real. Curiosity of Children.

Napoleons, who burnt incense only at the shrine of their own ambition, whose best deeds sprung from unworthy motives, who perpetrated, without compunction, or at least without hesitation, the blackest crimes, and who stopped not at the slaughter of millions of human beings, in order that they might gratify the nefarious ambition of treading upon the necks of subjugated empires.

One of the most crying defects of school-books is, that the instruction they convey is verbal instead of real; they deal in words rather than things. No fault can be more fatal to the solid progress of the pupil, or more likely to give him a distaste for study. It is a sin against nature, a direct warfare upon the order of Providence. What do we observe in children, if we take the trouble to watch their infant movements? An ardent, an irrepressible thirst for examining every object that falls in their way. The world is all fresh to them, and the feeling of wonder is predominant in their minds. When they get hold of a new thing, they examine it with all their senses,—they look at it, handle it, taste it, smell it, and are not satisfied till after repeated examinations. And many a time has a poor urchin, condemned to pore over unmeaning or incomprehensible sentences for hours together, been flogged for obeying this law of his nature, when the master was infinitely more deserving of chastisement than the scholar.

Nature to be consulted. Lessons on Objects. Biographies and Real Stories.

It is the humble business of the educationist to consult nature, and to follow her leadings in training the youthful faculties. Lessons on objects are, therefore, the first that should engage the attention of young learners. An excellent little work under this title has been prepared by Dr. Mayo, of England, for the use of teachers. These lessons teach things primarily, and words incidentally. But they teach even words more effectively than that system in which word-teaching is the principal and not the accessory, because each word becomes inseparably associated with the object or quality of which it is the sign, and therefore conveys a real meaning. Dr. Mayo's work would furnish hints, and in part materials, for the construction of an early reading-book in schools. It would be no objection to such a book, that its contents had been made familiar to the pupils in a different way; on the contrary, this would be an advantage. Children are always delighted to find in books what they already know. Hence it would be well if the first lessons in reading could always be made to convey ideas before familiar to their minds.

A small book, consisting of short biographies of men eminent for their virtues and usefulness, and written in a familiar, sprightly style, and of simple moral stories from real life, would be equally entertaining and useful in learning to read. I in-

Importance of Truth. School-books should deal in Facts. Selections.

sist upon the stories being real occurrences, and upon the biographies being prepared with the most scrupulous regard to accuracy. It is a great advantage, when a teacher can say to a child in putting a new work into his hands, "This book contains nothing that is not TRUE." Truth is to the character what the mainspring is to a watch; it is, by pre-eminence, the hinging virtue. It is, moreover, congenial to the mind. A mind soundly constituted, and well disciplined, will always prefer it to fiction, even for the pleasure it affords. And what a preponderating weight is given to it by the consideration that *facts*, however and whenever obtained, when they are once laid by in the memory, are always there, ready to be drawn forth for use, as occasion requires. No opportunity, therefore, should be omitted, no means neglected, for exciting a love of truth in the youthful bosom, and inducing a practical regard for it in all the transactions of subsequent life. As an appropriate companion to this, a volume containing judicious and interesting selections from voyages and travels, would form a valuable work.

Well written works on natural history, botany, physiology, and anatomy, would be as useful in learning to read as any others, and they would be attended with the additional advantage of conveying into the mind a large fund of various and im-

Reading-books on Natural History and other Subjects. Works required.

portant information. They should, however, always be illustrated by real specimens when attainable, and at all events by good engravings, coloured after nature, and all upon the same scale.

To carry out the views recommended in the second chapter of this work, several school-books, on entirely new subjects, would have to be written. The four principles already laid down, it is believed, constitute a safe and sufficient code for the preparation of class-books on any subject.

A word or two may be necessary here in explanation, to guard against misapprehension. In what has been said on existing school-books, I trust I have not sinned against justice, nor been wanting in liberality. Recent improvements have been freely admitted, and some of them pointed out and specially commended ; and I would now add, more distinctly, that text-books on some subjects are already in existence, as nearly perfect as things human can usually hope to become. Besides text-books on all the subjects taught, skilfully prepared on principles adapted to the juvenile mind, there ought to be in every school, for the use of the master and scholars, a well selected miscellaneous library of a few hundred volumes, chiefly on the subjects of religion, education, history, biography, agriculture, œconomics, the mechanic arts, and

School Libraries. Cabinets. Philosophical Apparatus.

the natural sciences. Small cabinets of natural history, including specimens in mineralogy, botany, ornithology, and zoology, might be collected by the teachers and pupils themselves, at little or no expense ; to which additions might be constantly making, by means of exchanges with other schools. It is desirable that the principal schools should be gradually furnished with such cheap and simple apparatus as will serve to exhibit the more important principles and interesting phenomena of chemistry and natural philosophy. The influence of these various aids to learning could not be otherwise than beneficial in a variety of respects. They would promote a taste for reading, excite a spirit of inquiry, direct the attention of pupils to things instead of names, blend amusement with instruction, enlarge the circle of thought, and lay a broader foundation for continued self-improvement in subsequent life.

The location and architecture of school-houses are matters of considerable importance, which have not hitherto received the attention they deserve. These edifices have generally been constructed with a principal reference to economy, and with an almost total disregard of taste and convenience. They are often placed in the bleakest situation in the whole district, without a tree, a flower, or scarcely a blade of grass, to relieve the

Location of School-Houses. Architecture. Inattention to these Matters.

eye, or any thing to protect them from the chilling sweep of the winter's winds, and the glare and heat of the summer's suns. They are almost universally forbidding objects to the sight, and ill-arranged, ill-ventilated, and comfortless as places of study. Now there is utterly a fault in this matter. The scenes and phenomena of external nature—the earth, with its beauties of mountain and valley—of stream and cataract—of beast and bird, and tree and flower, and the boundless heavens, with their ever shining garniture—do not, indeed, exert that power over the mind and heart that the society of human beings does; yet their influence is of so much importance that it is not the part of wisdom to overlook it in the education of the young. Such a position, therefore, should be selected for the site of a house of education as combines the greatest number of natural beauties and advantages possible under the circumstances; and then the hand of taste should be employed to augment and enrich them, so as to invest the whole place with a sweet and attractive air. The building itself ought to be constructed with a prime regard to neatness, convenience, and health; so that there should be nothing unsightly in its aspect—nothing uncomfortable, or prejudicial to health in its arrangements—nothing, in short, repulsive or chilling in its whole appearance and structure. It

School-Houses should be large enough for School and Master's Family.

is commonly the case, in Prussia, that the same building accommodates both the school and the teacher's family. This is probably the best arrangement, and it would be desirable, if possible, gradually to introduce it into our own practice.

CHAPTER VI.

GENERAL ORGANIZATION—OBSTACLES—ENCOURAGEMENTS.

A good Organic Constitution necessary to the efficiency of a system of Popular Education—A Consideration of the Objects to be accomplished by it necessary to its Formation—Various Officers essential—Their Services should be remunerated—Organization should be as simple as possible—Superintendent of Public Instruction—County Commissioners—Trustees for Townships—School Inspectors—Their various Duties—Means for securing Regular Attendance of Pupils, and Fidelity in Teachers—Diffidence with which these Suggestions are made—Consideration of Obstacles—Indifference of the People—Various Proofs of it—Lagging Legislation—Feebleness of Voluntary Associations—Periodicals on Education unsupported—Difficulty of removing this Indifference—Admitted Costliness a great Obstacle—Ought not to be—Friends of Education must be content to labour for remote Results—Obstacles arising from Points in our Social System, and Traits in our National Character—The Lust of Wealth and the Leaven of Agitation hinder Reform—Multiplication and Intermingling of Religious Sects a Hindrance—Remoteness and Impalpable nature of the Benefits to be gained a great Impediment—Our duty to provide for Posterity—This duty plainly written on the Creator's Plan—Pleasure arising from its Performance—Encouragements—Indifference giving way—Much has been already accomplished—Formation of Lyceums—Example of

Organic Constitution of the System. Diversity of Opinion.

other Countries—Popular Education not a Political Question—The Press unanimous in its Favour—Concluding Appeal to Statesmen and Legislators.

It will be in vain for any of our State Governments to provide with even princely liberality for the instruction and support of popular schools, and to prescribe the most comprehensive course of study, unless it also gives to its system such an organic constitution as will ensure practical efficiency in its operations. What this general organization should be, is a question on which great diversity of opinion is likely to exist. On the other points discussed in these hints, I not only feel assured, Gentlemen, that your views will coincide with mine, but I have some confidence that I shall unite the suffrages of a majority of the friends of education throughout the country. In reference to the question now to be considered, I entertain no such hope. A variety of plans might be proposed, any of which would be efficient for the object in view. It would, therefore, be presumption, perhaps, in any one to suppose that an organization according to his particular notions, would be the best possible; certainly I should esteem it as such in myself. Nevertheless, I have opinions on the subject; and I should regard my present undertaking as incomplete, if I withheld them from the public. My plan is better suited to a small

Objects to be accomplished. Services better rendered when paid for.

state than to a large one, and I frankly avow that I have our own commonwealth in my eye, in entering upon the exposition of it.

It is well to understand definitely what objects we propose to accomplish by this organic constitution. Clear ideas on this preliminary point will afford us essential aid in our subsequent inquiries. What, then, are the objects contemplated? The great object is the sound and thorough education of all the children in the state. But this must be reached through the attainment of subordinate objects. The chief of these are to secure, first, faithfulness in the teacher; secondly, a regular attendance on the part of pupils; thirdly, fidelity in the disbursement of the public money appropriated to this cause; and lastly, full returns to the Legislature, showing the annual results of the system adopted. These ends can be attained only through the agency of various state, county, and township officers, and certain statutory enactments.

Services of every description are, as a general thing, more cheerfully and faithfully rendered, when paid for. Let us start, then, with this postulate, that all the officers employed are to be adequately remunerated, either by salary, or by per diem allowances. We shall find our account in this, in whatever aspect it may be regarded. Let us also lay down another principle for our

Simplicity in the organic Law recommended. Four Classes of Officers.

guidance, viz. that the machinery of the system should be characterized by as much simplicity as is compatible with its efficient action. That of Prussia is too complex, too much intertwined, too military. One could easily infer from its multiform structure that the country where it prevails is familiar with standing armies.

I propose the appointment of four classes of officers, viz. a Superintendent of Public Instruction, a Commissioner of Common Schools for each county, three Trustees for every township, and two Inspectors for each school. The Superintendent to be chosen by the legislature for the term of three or five years, and to receive a liberal salary, both for the purpose of giving respectability to the office, and of securing in it the services of men of talent and character. A term of years is proposed, to guard against the consequences that might result from the fluctuations of political parties. Education has nothing to do directly with politics, and important offices connected with it ought not to be made dependent on the breath of political favour or enmity.

The School Inspectors to be chosen by ballot in each district, the Trustees for townships to be elected as the other township officers are, and the Commissioner for each county to be chosen by ballot by all the Trustees in the county, assembled

School Inspectors. Township Trustees. County Commissioners.

for that purpose, and always selecting one of their own number. All these officers to be paid so much per day for their time while actually engaged in the public service.

It should be made the duty of the Inspectors, from the performance of which nothing should ever be permitted to deter them, to visit and examine thoroughly the schools in their respective districts, at least once a month, and receive from the master the monthly report of attendance, behaviour, and progress of the pupils. In like manner it should be made the duty of the Trustees to visit and examine all the schools in their respective townships at least once a quarter, and to meet as often as that for the purpose of receiving reports from the School Inspectors. The Trustees in their turn to report to the County Commissioners.

The County Commissioners to constitute a Board of Education, to convene semi-annually, of which the Superintendent should be, *ex officio*, President. Each Commissioner to present at these meetings a report for his own county, to be passed into the hands of the Superintendent. It should be made the duty of this Board to examine candidates for the situation of teachers, and to consult on the general interests of education throughout the state.

The duties of the Superintendent of Public In-

Superintendent. Punctual Attendance of Pupils. Fidelity of Teachers.

struction would be multifarious and responsible, the least of which would be his annual reports to the body by whom he was elected. He would be required to take a general oversight of all the schools, to visit once a year every county in the state, to be instant, in season and out of season, in his efforts to keep alive and increase the interest of the people, and to labour unremittingly to disseminate information and to infuse a spirit of activity into the whole system. In short, he must be the heart of the system, whence a genial current of life and vigour shall flow to the most distant members.

To insure the punctual and regular attendance of the pupils, the principles both of hope and of fear might perhaps be appealed to with propriety. Some slight bounty might be offered to the child who should not miss a day from school throughout the year, except from sickness; and the parent might forfeit his title to any benefit from the distribution of the public money, by keeping his child at home beyond a specified proportion of the whole time.

For the encouragement of teachers, and to insure their fidelity and continued self-improvement, biennial or triennial examinations might be held, and some distinctions conferred upon those who are most deserving.

I am prepared to have some of these sugges-

This Plan may not be the best. An efficient Organization practicable.

tions received and treated as visionary, and others rejected as impracticable. If they are all discarded, and something better proposed in their stead, I pledge myself that I will abandon them without regret, and be among the first to hail the substitute with rejoicing. The organization proposed would necessarily require some modifications, if adopted in its general principles in a large state; and the establishment and successful operation of teachers' seminaries would also make some changes necessary.

These views are submitted, not dogmatically, but with unfeigned diffidence. Where there is so much room for difference of opinion, there is greater latitude of error, and the probabilities in favour of the correctness of any given opinions are diminished. The proper adjustment and balancing of all the parts of a general system of popular education, so as to secure complete efficiency, is a work requiring deep wisdom; yet experience has shown that it is altogether within the range of possibilities. Let the attempt but be made in earnest by any state, and prosecuted with ardour, and it requires not the word of a prophet to foretell that it will be completely successful, and that its success will be attended with consequences good in themselves, and most benign in their influence.

Is there any probability that such a system of

Will such a System be adopted? First Obstacle the People's Indifference.

popular education as I have attempted to trace out in the foregoing pages, or any thing approaching to it, will ever be adopted by the several states of our confederacy? It must be confessed that the prospect is not of the most cheering kind; and yet there are encouragements enough to keep out despair, and even to authorize the hope that the day will come, when this consummation shall be realized. The vast importance of a comprehensive education of the people, and the indispensable necessity of improved methods of instruction, are generally admitted. Why, then, are not schools universally established upon a proper basis, and maintained with a liberality commensurate with their acknowledged importance? To consider the obstacles in the way of so desirable a result, and the encouragements to hope that it may ultimately be secured, will be the object of the concluding portion of this work.

1. The difficulty that first rises to the thoughts in considering this subject, and the one perhaps of most formidable import, though negative in its character, is the indifference of the people in relation to it. This indifference is deep-seated, and exists to an almost incredible extent.

Where is the state within the limits of this nation, whose citizens are sufficiently alive to the value of education, to demand of their law-makers a

Various Proofs of this Indifference. Voluntary Associations languish.

system adequate to their wants? Not one such can be named. Even in Massachusetts, the best educated state in the union, the sum annually expended on common schools is, as you have seen, only a little more than one-fourth of what has been shown to be indispensable to the support of such schools as we need. In Pennsylvania, where a system of common schools, devised with wisdom, and highly beneficial in its results, has been for several years in operation, more than one-fourth of the people still refuse to accede to it. In the legislature of New Jersey, at its last session, only some half dozen votes could be obtained in favour of a proposition to improve our common schools.

What is the usual history of those voluntary societies which are from time to time formed for the promotion of popular education? They are got up with considerable spirit; they give promise of salutary fruits; they languish for a few years through a sickly and ever-waning existence; and then sink beneath the waves of oblivion, to be followed by others destined to a like fate. The American Lyceum might be made a mighty instrument of good to this cause; yet it is comparatively inefficient for want of that support which a moderate share of general interest in education could not fail to give it.

Do periodicals on education meet with any bet-

Failure of Periodicals on Education. Indifference its Cause.

ter fate? Their career is still more brief and inglorious. Within the short space of seven years, no less than seven works of this kind have been started, which have scarcely survived their birth; while the eighth, the *Annals of Education*, has, till within a year or two past, struggled on through a feeble and uncertain existence. The *Common School Assistant*, a monthly newspaper, edited by Mr. J. Orville Taylor, has been published for about two years, and is said to have an extensive circulation. Beyond these two, I know of none published at the present time in any part of the country. Is this the way in which the people of the United States display their interest in a given subject? No, indeed. Political papers are circulated by thousands; religious periodicals by hundreds; law, medical, and literary journals, temperance, agricultural, and abolition papers, each by fifties or by dozens. Periodicals devoted to education alone, of all others, perish and are forgotten after a few months' struggle for life, and the loss of some hundreds of dollars out of the pockets of their conductors.

But why multiply proofs of the prevalent indifference to education? Alas! their name is legion. He that runs may read them. Even the interest of those who affect to deplore the want of it in others is often limited to an occasional sigh, a few

How can this Indifference be removed? Tendencies opposed to it.

newspaper articles, or an address now and then at a popular meeting. This indifference is the main obstacle that lies in the way of an efficient reform. But the problem is how to remove it. Archbishop Whately, in his Lectures on Political Economy, argues that a barbarous nation has no tendency to civilize itself. Reasoning upon the same principle, the London Quarterly Review endeavours to show that an uneducated society has no natural tendency to educate itself; that the impulse must come from above; from those who have created the want that the others do not feel. It says truly that it is impossible for persons of uncultivated and torpid minds to know to what an extent education exalts, enlarges, and stimulates the understanding; how much it raises, refines, and strengthens the moral feelings; nor how incalculably it increases the happiness of its possessor, and tends to make him both independent of the world, and a safe and useful member of society. Hence such persons will never seek it self-moved. They must be acted upon from without,—by those who are impressed with a sense of its manifold advantages; who see in it the only means of promoting genuine civilization; of instilling correct principles and salutary habits; of implanting a love of industry, temperance, and regularity; and of stifling whatever is repugnant to law, order, and morality.

Expense of the System an Obstacle. Money could not be better appropriated.

2. The greatness of the admitted and even avowed expense of an efficient national education is an obstacle of no small magnitude in the way of its accomplishment. There is nothing of which our legislators generally are so much afraid as of voting away money even in small sums, and for the best and wisest purposes; much less will they be willing, till instructed in a voice of authority by the people themselves, to appropriate it by millions for the maintenance of schools. How can the people be influenced to move in this matter effectually? Nothing will do it but the most vigorous and persevering efforts on the part of those whose views are in advance of the times, to disseminate light, to rectify error, and to open the eyes of the community to the perils of ignorance and the blessings of knowledge.

It would be a noble and even a sublime spectacle to see a great nation, that has already set an example to the world of rational liberty and sober self-government, following up what she has achieved by that which would confirm it to the latest posterity,—by a charter of perpetuity, in the endowment of popular schools, on a scale worthy of herself, and corresponding with their intrinsic importance. And to what better, wiser, or more useful purpose could the resources indicated in the fourth chapter of these Hints be devoted? Will

No Price too great for Education. We must persevere in the Work.

it be said that the expenditure is enormous? No price is great which is not disproportionate to the value of the article purchased. And if we take this principle as our guide, we must admit that four times the sum asked would be well expended, if so much were necessary, to secure the end in view.

Is it too much to hope that the nation may be brought to the point of incurring the needed expense? To expect such a result immediately, would argue either the blindness of ignorance, or the weakness of the enthusiast. But the friends of education must be content to labour for a remote good. They must fix their aims high, and proclaim them to the world; and then buckle on the armour of firm resolve and determined perseverance. Let them plant themselves upon the impregnable and lofty principle, that truth is great and will prevail. Let there be no concealment, no disguise, no deceptive and honied insinuation. "The movements and workings of the social system have become too deep and potent, to leave room for operations of a slender, ambiguous, or insinuating kind. We have come to no gentle mood of the world's history. This is no hour of leisure and facility and soft persuasion. He who dares not speak explicitly and boldly, had better not speak at all. Nothing will now avail the cause of truth but the courage which truth ought to inspire." If the

Our Social System in some respects adverse in its Influence.

necessary boldness be coupled with due discretion, and sustained by a spirit that shrinks not, wavers not, and is not discouraged either by delays or opposition, it is neither blind, nor weak, nor visionary, to indulge the hope that such exertions in behalf of our cause will in the end prevail.

3. There are points in our social system, and some traits in our national character, which stand in the way of the gigantic scheme we are advocating. The paths of ambition are here open to all. The obscure of to-day may be the illustrious of to-morrow ; and a single false step in politics often leads over a precipice, at whose base present realizations and reasonable hopes may be seen in scattered and irrecoverable fragments. This makes the ambitious aspirant for public favour timid, shrinking, and over-cautious as to every one of his public acts. It makes those who, by their talents, learning, and commanding position, are capable of controlling public opinion, the mere echoes, nay, almost the slaves, of that very opinion, which they ought rather to enlighten and rectify. This, it will be seen at once, is an adverse influence of tremendous power, especially if it be admitted that there is no inherent tendency in an uneducated community to educate itself, and that the first impulse to that end must come from

Several Traits in our national Character opposed to Reform.

abroad, that is, for the most part, from those very persons, who are afraid to touch the ark from a morbid dread of the loss of popularity.

The lust of wealth, the frenzy of enterprise, and the leaven of agitation which has diffused itself through almost the whole mass of society, are points each in our national character whose influence, as far as it goes, is opposed to a thorough reform of our existing systems of popular instruction. It is not necessary to go into any lengthened analysis of these causes, and to show that their effect is essentially such as it is here stated to be; their operation lies upon the surface, and may be known and read of all men. When the *sacra auri fames*—the accursed hunger of gold—has become, in the majority of minds, a craving that knows no intermission; when steamboats, railroads, and canals, the purchase and sale of lands, the eager pursuits of commerce and manufactures, and the thousand other modes of rapid accumulation which the ingenuity of avarice has devised, form the themes that occupy men's thoughts by night and by day; and when society is agitated almost to its foundations by innumerable exciting causes,—it is easy to perceive that it is not the most favourable time for those calm investigations and steady exertions which are essential to the solid improvements in education for which we are contending.

Difference in religious Opinion another Obstacle.

4. The multiplication and intermingling of religious sects in this country constitute another and not inconsiderable hindrance to the realization of our wishes on this subject. It has already been shown that popular education, in order to be of any substantial value, must teach the evidences on which the religion of the Bible rests its claim to be considered a communication from Heaven; that it must communicate what is capital in its doctrines, as well as the main facts of its history; and that it must instil into its pupils the principles and habits of practical godliness. It is admitted that to harmonize the elements of discord so as effectually to secure this indispensable condition without calling into activity sectarian prejudices and jealousies, is a labour of deep practical wisdom. But that it is a work altogether impracticable, can hardly be supposed; since it is apparently essential to the carrying forward of the great designs of Providence, and the introduction of that glorious period, the brightest in the world's history, the theme of the most impassioned strains of prophecy and poetry, when the universal diffusion of KNOWLEDGE AND HOLINESS shall restore to the moral world the lost image of its Maker, and bring back, not merely the remembrance, but the enjoyment, of the peace and beauty of Eden.

5. The last in that ill-omened train of impedi-

Remoteness of the Benefits to be gained a great Impediment.

ments to which reference will now be made is found in the remoteness and the impalpable nature of the benefits to be gained by the adoption of the course recommended. Mr. Simpson, in his work on the Necessity of Popular Education, has placed the fallacy and the selfishness of this plea in so strong a light, that I must crave indulgence for asking your attention to a somewhat lengthened extract.

“ If it were true, as it is not, that we of the present generation shall derive no benefit from the progress, nay, even from the commencement of this moral revolution, we should be bound, nevertheless, to effect it, when in the nature of things it can only be accomplished by one generation, to be fully enjoyed by another. It is a low morality which would recklessly throw our burdens upon our successors, to work out their deliverance from these as they may, but refuse the slightest sacrifice for their benefit. A succeeding generation owes its existence to the present, and has a claim, in justice as well as benevolence, to inherit all our accumulations of wealth and knowledge, and a right to reproach us with a great sin in the Creator’s sight, if we have selfishly shrunk from the duty which he has inscribed on his great plan, that one generation shall often sow the seed, that another may gather the harvest. This duty extends from the planting of a tree, to the enlightening of

Our Obligations to Posterity. Self-esteem a Motive to Exertion.

a people. To decline our share in the means of the progression of the human race, when we have arrived at light enough to show us the way, would be a moral prostration which would stigmatise an age.

“A legitimate self-esteem is well entitled here to supply its share of motive, and make us proud that, in the course of Providence, it has fallen to *our* times to do this great thing; to preside over the culture, assured that our children, and our children’s children will gather the increase. Yes, there are minds of glorious loftiness,—minds that would do a deed to bless mankind, and be content to die. Lavoisier waited the moment when a great truth should be revealed in the results of a scientific process, in which he was intensely engaged, when they came to lead him to the scaffold. He entreated to have three days granted him to crown the great work of the new chemistry. Robespierre refused an hour, and, like the caitiff who struck down Archimedes, murdered Lavoisier. Heroism like this is not now before us; but I trust there are many of my countrymen, who, if it were propounded to them, whether their satisfaction would be the greater to aid in effecting the glorious scheme of education, or to live in another generation, and passively taste its fruits, would choose the glory of the enterprise, rather than the sweets of

Consideration of Encouragements. Popular Indifference yielding.

the result ; and would avow that there is an expansion of feeling, a dilation of heart, a lofty ambition even, in being permitted to be the actors in a work to have such consequences in another generation, which gives them to live, as it were, in both periods, to enjoy alike the springtide and the autumn, and, like Abraham, to see the day afar off and be glad."

But amid all that is gloomy in our prospects, and disheartening in the obstacles that oppose themselves to reform, there are not wanting sources of consolation and hope. Nay, the encouragements, when calmly weighed, will be found to preponderate over considerations of an opposite kind. These encouragements I shall rather advert to than discuss ; leaving it to you, and to others who may honour my work with a perusal, to follow out the topics suggested with such reflections as will naturally arise.

1. The indifference alluded to as among the most formidable obstacles to improved systems of popular education, is already giving way to a lively, and active, and general interest in the subject. Great inroads have been made upon it within the last few years ; it has been gradually, but surely melting away before the efforts to remove it, like icebergs beneath the influence of southern skies ; and the impulse has been already given,

Proofs of this. Education a frequent Topic of Conversation.

which, if no untoward events occur to impede the movement, will certainly end in its entire demolition, and the substitution in its place of enlightened zeal and active exertions in the great body of the people. We have had abundant proof of this in our own state, within the few weeks last past, in the numerous and spirited meetings held in all parts of our commonwealth for the purpose of petitioning the legislature for improvements in our common school system. The importance of a thorough education of all classes in the community, and the necessity of reforming and extending our operations for that end, are becoming frequent topics of conversation in those circles and among those individuals, where we look for the first movements in any meditated amelioration of the social system. Nor are these topics confined to the conversation of the classes here alluded to ; they have spread far beyond them. Multitudes of the labouring classes feel and proclaim the necessity of a better education for their children. Would that they would rise in their might, and demand it of their rulers. On the whole, it must be confessed and deplored, that "there remains much land to be possessed;" but Jordan has been passed, the walls of Jericho are prostrate, and we are already advancing into the heart of the enemy's country. Let our watchword be **ONWARD**; let our course be marked by prudence; let our vigilance and our

What has been already accomplished a Source of Hope.

labour be unremitted; and triumph will certainly perch upon our banner; and our children and children's children shall reap the harvest we have sown.

2. Much has been already accomplished in various sections of the country. To enter into particulars in illustration of this point would require more space than can be devoted to that purpose, though the illustration could not fail to be both interesting and instructive. I can only refer, therefore, in general terms, to what has been achieved in New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and several other western states. Governors Marcy, Wolf, Ritner, Vance, Mason, and others, have imposed a heavy debt of gratitude upon their fellow-citizens, by their zeal in recommending, and their active exertions in urging forward, the improvements in their respective states; and they have in this way gained more true glory, and done more lasting service to their country, than by a long career of military triumphs. Long may such men live to infuse their own spirit into souls of heavier mould, and to roll along the wheels on which are borne the political safety, the moral elevation, and the true happiness, of the human race!

There are some organizations narrower in their operations than the entire territory of a state,

Formation of numerous Lyceums affords a twofold Encouragement.

which deserve to be mentioned as among the encouraging signs of the times. Prominent among these are the school systems of the cities of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. They have already been the source of uncounted blessings to hundreds of thousands of human beings ; they are now established upon a firm basis, perfected by the experience of many years, and conducted with enlightened zeal and liberality ; and may justly be regarded as among the “ proudest monuments any people ever raised to the cause of learning, truth and virtue.”

3. The formation and flourishing condition of numerous lyceums afford to the friends of education encouragement of a twofold character ; they are indices of what has already been done—of the extent to which an interest in the subject now prevails ; and they are pledges of good things to come. They are both the effect and the cause of an increase of zeal and activity in the cause of education—reform.

4. The example of other countries, the progress they have made in establishing and perfecting sound systems of primary education, are well fitted to cheer us on in the work. “ What has been done can be done,” is a maxim which has grown old, because it is true. It seems to have been in most things silently acted upon by the United States, as a nation. It is rare that they allow themselves to

The Example and Achievements of other Nations encouraging.

be outstripped by other countries in any thing, especially if it be a project having somewhat of tangible utility in it. It were well if this emulation, which seems natural to us as a people, could be extended to education. There is much in those systems of public instruction on the continent of Europe, to which reference has been repeatedly made, in the progress of this work, which might be advantageously copied by us. "Germany is our teacher, not merely in the matured national plan of Prussia so often referred to, but very generally over the empire." France, too, is in some respects our teacher; certainly in the zeal with which she entered upon the labour of reform in the establishment of a national system, in the spirit with which she prosecutes the work, and the liberality with which she expends for the support and perfection of her popular schools.

5. It is an encouraging circumstance that popular education is not made a political question among us. It is a defect in our social system, a result which seems inseparable from a national organization such as ours, that almost every practical question of importance, whether or not it has any inherent political bearing, mixes itself up with polities, and the success or failure of propositions growing out of it is made to hinge on political considerations. This appears to be the price of

Education not a political Question. Great encouragement in this.

liberty, the penalty of self-government. How far the proper education of every individual in the community would go towards diminishing this price and removing the penalty, our children will perhaps be better able to judge than ourselves. At all events, it is fortunate that education is one of those few questions on which men of all parties can and do meet, and combine their efforts. This fact is a legitimate subject of congratulation, and is not the weakest of those grounds of encouragement and hope, which should inspire the breast with courage, and nerve the arm to vigorous action. In this particular we have the advantage of those who are battling in the same cause in Great Britain. The whole power of the ultra Tory party is there armed against all change, in education as in every thing else.

6. The last in our list of encouragements, though not the least in influence and importance, is that the Press UNIVERSALLY is in our favour! If there are any exceptions to this remark, they are not known to me, and are at any rate too few in number to be of any account. This is alike true of the daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly journals, in every part of our land. With one voice they have proclaimed and reiterated the solemn truth that—“**IF WE FAIL BY EDUCATION TO AWAKE, GUIDE, CONFIRM THE MORAL ENERGIES OF OUR PEOP-**

The Press in Favour of Education. Appeal to its Conductors.

PLE, WE ARE LOST!" May this sentiment, so true in fact, so fearful in import, be echoed back by our whole people! May it be emblazoned on our banners, inscribed on our halls of legislation, proclaimed from the pulpit and the rostrum, imbibed by our children with the milk that nourishes their infancy, and written indelibly upon the tablet of our heart.

To the conductors of the Press may I, without presumption, be permitted to say—Persevere in your advocacy of this noble cause, and redouble your efforts in it. You hold in your hands an instrument of tremendous power. Wield it with caution; wield it with boldness; but above all, wield it for the blessing of your race. And in reference to the education of the people—that paramount interest of a free state—let the voice of warning, of remonstrance, and of exhortation, never cease to be heard. Cry aloud, and spare not—till our desolate and waste places shall become like Eden, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.

And now, gentlemen, these hasty and imperfect Hints are drawing towards a close. I have gone over the whole ground which I proposed to myself to occupy at the outset of my undertaking. I have treated of a subject which yields to no other in importance, in whichever of its relations you

Recapitulation of Topics discussed in the Work.

choose to consider it; would that I had possessed the talent to present its claims in a style and with an earnestness commensurate with that importance. I have brought to my task honesty of purpose, an ardent love for the cause I have endeavoured to advocate, the deepest convictions of its inseparable connexion with the best interests of man, and that measure of ability with which it has pleased Him who gives and withholds in wisdom, to endow me. Let us now pause, and briefly survey the ground over which we have travelled. If I have not missed my aim, the following positions, among others, have been established:—

Education is necessary for all classes, and for each individual in the community, especially in a government founded upon the popular will; and it is the *duty* of such a government to take care that this great end be secured.

The education established for the people, to be suitable, must be real, not verbal; it must teach *things* primarily, *words* incidentally; it must cultivate the faculties of observation and comparison, and communicate the art of reflection; it must educate the senses and the physical powers, and convey to the pupils a knowledge of the dignity of their nature, of their relations to other beings, of their rights and duties as men and citizens, of the progress of human affairs in different ages and

Recapitulation continued.

countries, and of the manifold and wonderful works of the Creator by which they are surrounded; in short, it must make them moral, reflective, independent in judgment and action, industrious, and religious. These high objects are not secured, as a general thing, by our present systems, and therefore a reform is necessary.

Good schools cannot exist without good teachers. We have at present but few teachers properly qualified, and cannot have without provision for their special training. A supply of competent instructors can be obtained only through the agency of teachers' seminaries. Institutions of this kind are indispensable, and ought to be forthwith established. Departments for the training of teachers engrafted on colleges and academies, would be better than nothing, but original, independent institutions are preferable.

Teaching should be made a permanent business, and elevated to its proper rank among the other professions. In order to effect this, not only must the qualifications of teachers be elevated above their present standard, but their compensation must be greatly increased. It is now a mere pittance, not amounting in fact to as much as can be realized from any other employment. The country is able to pay liberally for education; nothing is wanting but the disposition.

Recapitulation Concluded.

Notwithstanding the very great improvements that have been made of late years in school-books, other works of a higher order are still needed on some subjects; and on several branches of knowledge that ought to be introduced as studies into our common schools, we have as yet no text-books at all. Knowledge is the natural food of the mind, and the pursuit of it, prosecuted on proper principles, is always a source of pleasure. Bad books, and worse modes of instruction, are the chief causes of the general aversion of the young to study. Our common schools ought all to be supplied with small but well selected libraries, with cabinets of natural history and mineralogy, and with apparatus for illustrating the simpler principles of science. The location and architecture of school-houses have been greatly neglected, but deserve attention. Such an organic constitution should be given to a system of general education as will ensure its practical efficiency.

Finally, various and formidable obstacles stand in the way of the improvements needed; but these are more than counterbalanced by facts and considerations of an encouraging character, which are sufficient to inspire the friends of education with courage and zeal, and to incite them to active exertion.

If these positions have been sustained, or, whe-

Our Duty to Posterity as inferred from the whole Discussion.

ther they have or not, if they are true, they impose upon us duties of high import, requiring for their due performance, rare combinations of qualities, and reaching in their effects through all coming time. We may not shrink from them, without incurring a fearful responsibility. The intelligent and conscientious discharge of these duties, is a debt which we owe to our children and to posterity. It is shared by every citizen, but it rests with augmented claims upon those who are chosen to make our laws, and watch over our public interests. Could I indulge the hope that any appeal from so humble an individual would have aught of weight with the statesmen and legislators of the land, I would say to them—Consult for all the interests of your constituents; let none be overlooked, neglected, or forgotten; but let the education of the people receive, as it deserves, your earliest, deepest, and most unremitting attention. A system of popular schools, comprehensive in its range of studies, thorough in its modes of mental discipline, and pure in its every influence, is the sheet-anchor of our social system. It is the bond of our union, the ward and keeper of our constitution, the charter of our happiness, our safety, and our rights. “Other measures may change, and yield, and be forgotten, as the national mind changes or subsides beneath them; but this is a

Concluding Appeal to Statesmen and Legislators.

measure which creates the national mind, which insures, by its firm and broad substructions, the solidity and durability of every other structure." You have provided for other interests, far inferior in importance to this, with clear-sighted wisdom, and corresponding liberality. You have made this country in many respects a leading member in the great brotherhood of nations. In her internal improvements, her prisons, and her various and numerous public charities, she may challenge comparison with the proudest of her competitors. Her civil and social institutions have excited the admiration of distant nations, and been made the theme of panegyric before their councillors and their senates. You, and all of us, are justly proud of these high honours, and cherish the glory conferred upon our country by such exalted testimonies to her intelligence, her humanity, and her public spirit. But, like the young man in the Gospel, she lacks one thing; and that, as in his case, is the most important. It is a broad, sound, liberal system of public instruction in each of her constituent members. I am not, indeed, insensible to the efforts already made, nor to the good actually accomplished; and it would ill become me to disparage them. Some of you have nobly entered upon the good work of reform.*

* The legislatures of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and some other states, have commenced the work in earnest, and are prosecuting it with activity.

Reward to be gained by providing for the Enlightenment of the People.

Carry it forward, carry it forward, with a Spartan spirit of perseverance, to its full completion. Crown the honour of the nation. Establish every where schools for the people, multiply the sources of knowledge, lay deep and broad the foundations of enlightened systems of popular education ;—and your reward shall be in the consciousness of duty performed and benefits conferred ; posterity, to the latest age, shall bless your memory ; and the glory of millennial illumination shall be hastened by your labours.

THE END.

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